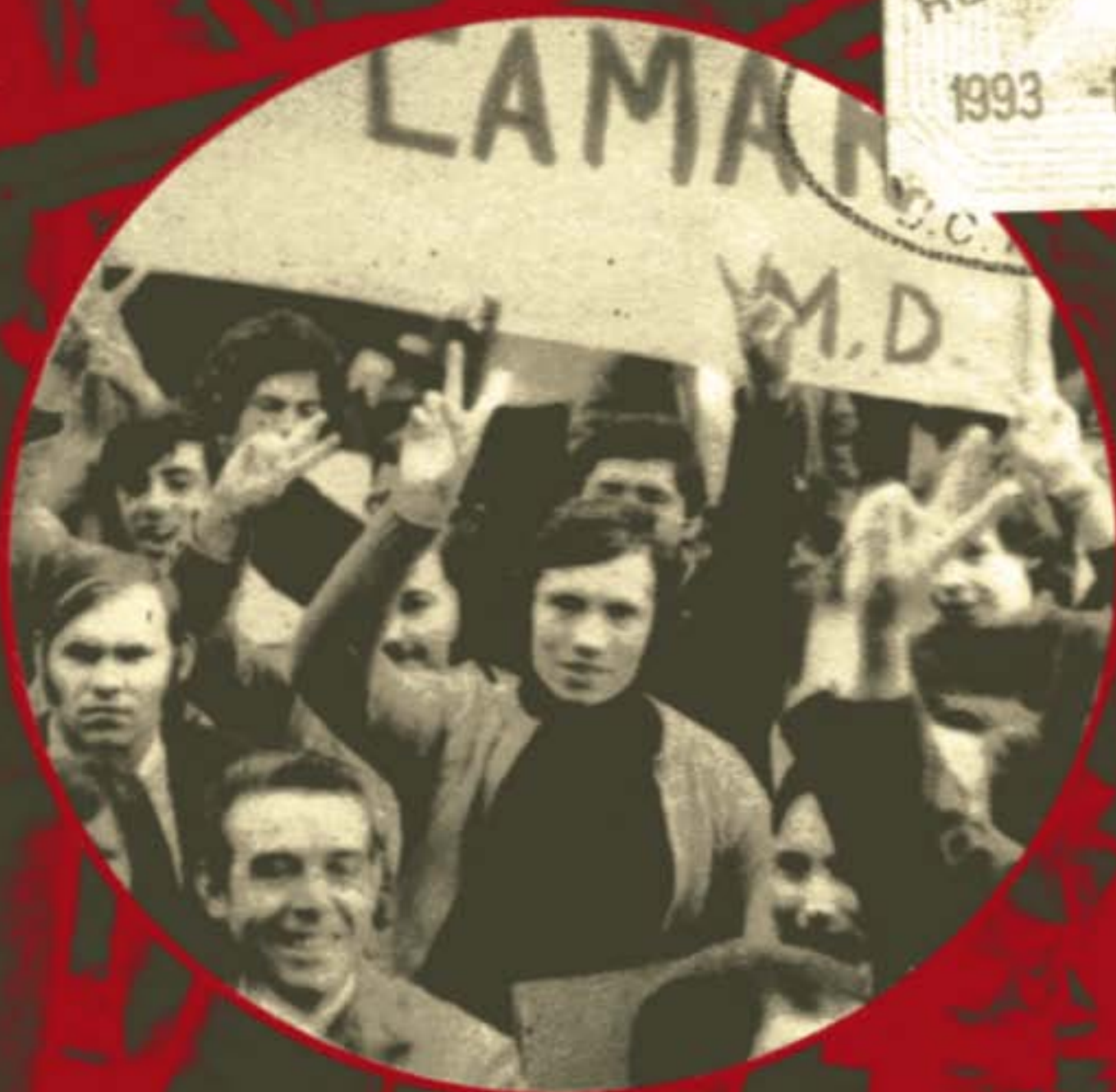
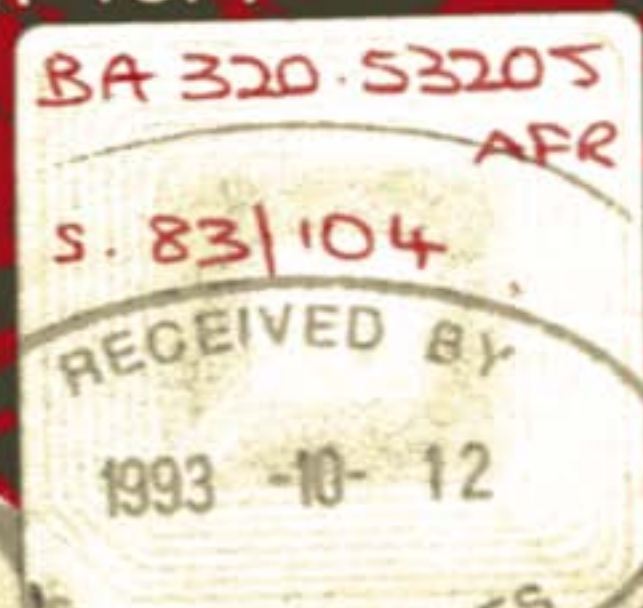


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EVENTS IN PORTUGAL

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No. 58 Third Quarter 1974

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EDITORIAL NOTES



THE EVENTS IN PORTUGAL

STATEMENT BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SACP

The whole of progressive mankind celebrates the fall of Caetano's fascist regime. But for the people of Portugal and those of unliberated Africa, the event has a special significance.

After fifty years of fearless resistance our comrades in Portugal's revolutionary underground, liberated from Caetano's jails, emerging from their enforced illegality and returning from exile, are leading the Portuguese people to consolidate and advance the historic gains of the April events. In the embattled Portuguese colonies in Africa the armed liberation forces of FRELIMO, PAIGC and MPLA, after decades of struggle, have made a direct contribution to the toppling of one of the oldest and most entrenched fascist regimes. In doing so they have made a giant stride in their own advance to inevitable victory.

The events are a major set-back for Vorster, Smith and those groups in Mozambique and Angola still dedicated to minority rule. It is no longer possible for Portuguese imperialism to be in intimate and open embrace with them. They fear that the sweep of the Portuguese revolution may erode completely this important pillar of the unholy tripartite alliance.

In South Africa our people will gain enormous encouragement from the changed situation. It has shown them once again that the power of a people struggling for their just rights, is supreme. To continue its domination fascist Portugal poured into its territories hundreds of thousands of troops, the most modern and advanced weaponry, and billions in money. Yet faced with this overwhelming military superiority the guerrilla in the bush — the peasant and worker soldiers of the people's liberation armies — backed by the material and moral solidarity of the OAU, the socialist countries and the working class and democratic forces of the world, struck blow after blow until it became obvious to the enemy that no amount of force could put out the fires of liberation. It was proved in Vietnam. It is being proved once again in the Portuguese colonies and the blows for freedom which have been struck there are also blows for our own freedom.

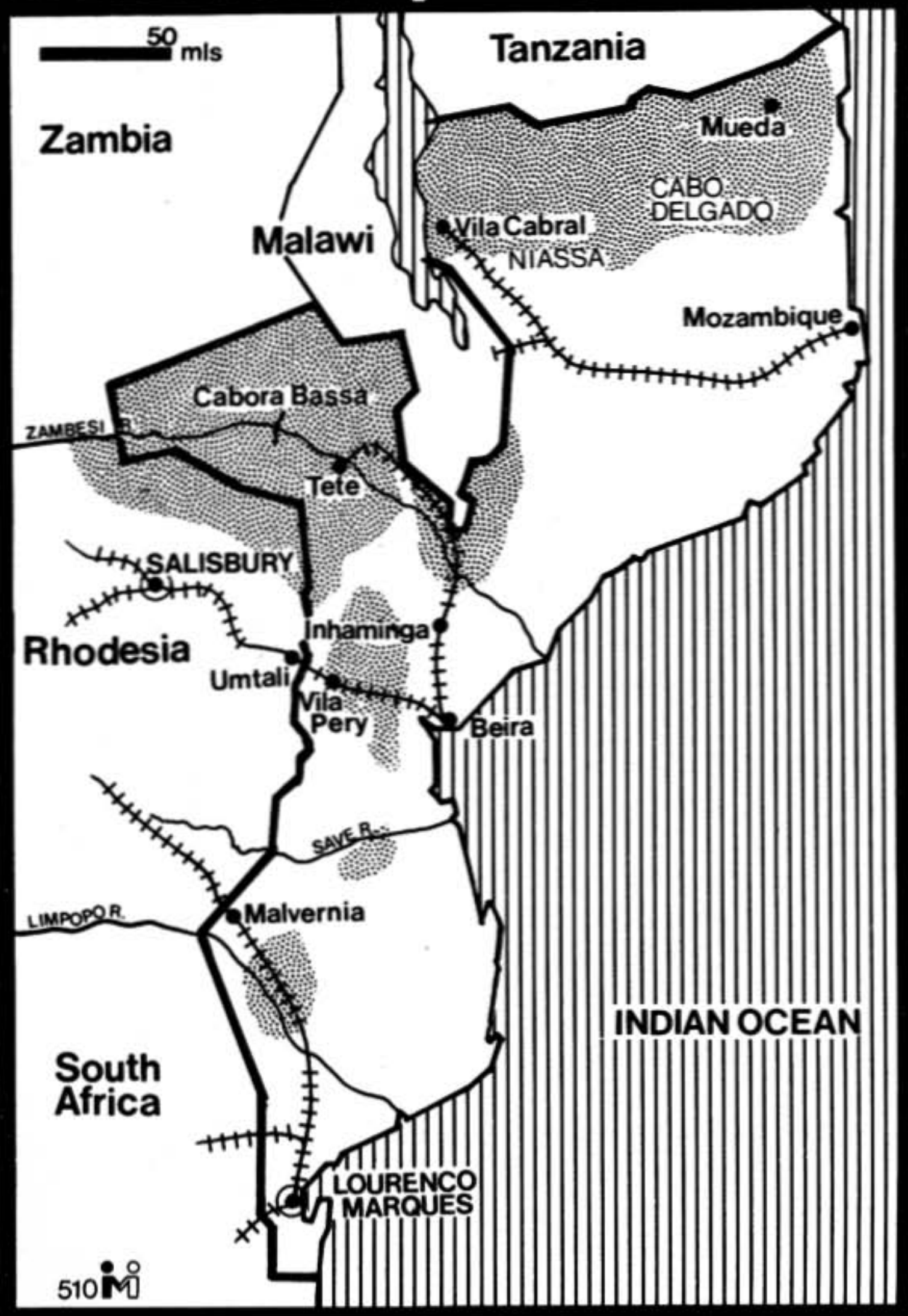
In South Africa the fear within the enemy camp of the liberation forces creeping closer is no longer a projection for the future, but an immediate reality and we can, as a result, expect a heightening of the tensions and contradictions within the ruling class on the most effective answer to this threat.

In Zimbabwe the conditions for struggle by the liberation forces will become increasingly more favourable in direct proportion to the successes of FRELIMO, with Smith facing a situation in which he has not safe access to the coast except through South Africa and a hostile border of over a thousand miles.

In Mozambique, Angola and Guinea Bissau, a new and more favourable dimension has been added to the struggles of the people in these areas.

At the time of writing it is too early to predict the precise course of the future and, in particular, the extent to which reaction both in Portugal and Africa will manage to regroup and take steps to stem the tide of change which the events so far seem to make possible. For the Portuguese people, the taste of freedom and the new release of

Mozambique: where the guerrillas are active



democratic political energies place on the agenda a thorough-going, social transformation internally, and an immediate end to Portuguese *imperialist* domination. This task is a complex one and, as stated by the general secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party, Alvaro Cunhal, "The popular movement is on the upsurge but difficulties caused by the vestiges of the Salazar corporative state remain."

Communists supported the junta, he said because it was the result not of a military state coup, but a mass movement of the people, and the democratic measures undertaken by the junta would get the support of all communists.

On the situation in Africa, comrade Cunhal stated unequivocally that the people stood for the granting of immediate independence to the peoples of Angola, Guinea and Mozambique, although "among a part of the armed forces there is not yet the necessary clarity as to the ways and means and the time-table of the solution to this problem."

For the liberation movements in the Portuguese territories the stage has been set by their struggle which played such an important part in the destruction of the Caetano regime, to force an early settlement in their areas on the only acceptable basis — genuine independence under the leadership of the liberation organisations.

For the liberation movements in the other embattled areas of the south — in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia — the new situation calls for an intensification of all forms of struggle, not only in the interests of their own people, but also to weaken Vorster's and Smith's capacity to pre-empt the full consequences of the recent events by direct or indirect intervention.

But whatever the outcome, and from whatever angle we examine the latest developments, it is crystal clear that the new situation has made the conditions of struggle, both in Portugal and in Africa, more favourable for the freedom forces, and has brought closer the ultimate triumph of the cause of national and social liberation.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

29 April, 1974

THE ISOLATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

There are few parallels in history for a campaign of boycott as sustained and widespread as that sponsored against South Africa by its liberation movement. For fifteen years that campaign has widened its range, reaching out to isolate South Africa from every possible source of support, of acceptance, of comfort or of contact with the rest of the world.

Its success has been remarkable. Scarcely any aspect of international traffic, whether financial or commercial; professional or sporting; cultural or academic; diplomatic or touristic has been unaffected. Ordinary people, popular organisations and governments have been drawn in to a campaign whose aim is simple — to isolate South Africa and to break all its links with the outside world. The basis of that campaign is that these links with the world outside act as crutches to maintain the system of apartheid; they provide finance for its industries and the markets for its products; the comforts of life for its ruling class, and the armaments for the suppression of its oppressed.

Always the campaign has advanced in the face of opposition — not from the South African government alone, but also from the predictable defenders of apartheid — the foreign businessmen with heavy financial stakes in South Africa, the lunatic fringes of world facism, the surrounding white supremacist regimes who will sink if apartheid falls, and the last-ditch archaic defenders of empire and the 'white-man's-civilising-mission.' That opposition has never made much headway against the popular hostility to apartheid throughout the world, however it is prettied up by its defenders.

The voice of some recent opponents of the boycott movement, however, are not so easy to dismiss. For these voices are raised not in defence of apartheid, but against it; not by supporters of the South African government but by variously-hued opponents of it. Considerable publicity has been given to the views, for example, of KwaZulu's Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, intermittently a harsh critic of the South African government and — equally intermittently — a self-proclaimed supporter of national liberation, who pleads constantly for increased foreign investment in South Africa, and particularly in Vorster's Bantustans. So too to the views of Helen Suzman, leader of the Progressive Party, for ten years its lone anti-government voice in

Parliament, who deplores the trade boycott because it threatens the job prospects of black South Africans. Or the playwright Athol Fugard, who pioneered non-racial theatre in South Africa with a series of searching dramatic examinations of human relations deformed by apartheid, and who seeks to end the cultural boycott in order to raise the cultural horizons of black South Africans. Or the British Trade Union Congress, long-time opponents of apartheid, who want British businessmen encouraged to open up industrial plants in South Africa, in order to implant British concepts of industrial democracy and trade-unionism there.

Understandably, such voices rouse considerable anger and resentment among members of the South African liberation movements, who have given many years of effort to make the boycott a real force, and who now see signs of its impact being felt in South Africa. In part, their anger stems from the fact that these boycott-busters break into the public area with their individual calls, as though no one but them care at all about the future of black South Africans, and as though they alone are possessed of revealed truth. They proclaim their actions as being 'in the best interests of the black majority', regardless of the fact that none of them — Buthelezi included — has any mandate from any representative section of the black population for their views.

These vocal critics of the boycott campaign were not with the national liberation movement in the years of bitter and costly battle for the cause they now claim to uphold.

They were not with the liberation movements when they pioneered the organisation of black trade unions, nor when bitter strikes were being fought in mines and factories against starvation wages. They were not with the movement when affiliation of black trade unions to the all-white TUC was being fought for, nor when the international recognition of non-racial sporting bodies was being sought. They were not with the liberation movement when their voices raised in public support may well have made some difference to the course of South African development. Why then are they so ready *now* to raise their voices publicly to undermine those who were, and who have served a long and punishing apprenticeship in the struggles of their people which entitles them to speak on behalf of those in South Africa who cannot otherwise be heard.

Perhaps, it will be said in the defence of these critics of the

boycott, that they were too young to have participated in all those struggles of the past; perhaps they only recently became aware. Perhaps so. If so, a little more humility from them all would be more becoming; and a little less brash eagerness to tilt the scales against the boycott movement in a way which must warm the hearts of the South African government, however good their intentions. It would also be fitting for them to ponder whether the wide publicity given to their views on radio, television and in the press is not perhaps orchestrated behind the scenes by the South African government and its big-business public relations lobby, the South African Foundation.

THE EVIDENCE COUNTS

But for all that, their views need to be answered, because they become threateningly disruptive of the boycott campaign, just at the time when its first fruits are being reaped. If there is amongst them a real desire to weigh the facts objectively — not just to rush brashly in in support of their own special interests — they would find the answer easily enough. Instead of some liberating or exemplary role for British or other foreign capital for South Africa, they would observe that the most recent shootings of black workers in industrial dispute — the shootings at Carletonville last year — were carried out by South African government police summoned by the officials of the appropriately named *Anglo-American* Corporation, who employed the miners. And that, despite all the recent publicity and exposure of wage-rates in British owned factories in South Africa, it is that front-runner of the British motor-car industry, British Leyland, whose South African plant last April summarily fired its African staff for demanding consultation between their employers and their Union.

Those who imagine that foreign capital investment liberates would observe that in fact South Africa's wage patterns, its pass laws, its system of migratory labour and law-enforced labour contracts have their origins in the heartland of foreign investment in South Africa — the gold mining industry — which set the pattern ninety years ago, and still upholds it today; that this system is the foundation of the high profits which attracted capital there from abroad in the first place, and which attracts it there today.

But the case is often argued that cultural exchange is somehow different; that the broadening effect of cultural contact *must* be good, whatever one says of investment, trade or sports relationships. The evidence points the other way. Over a hundred years of unfettered cultural contact between South Africa and the world outside preceded the age of apartheid. In that period racial myths and race hatreds grew up to serve the needs of slave traders, of empire builders and colonisers. The worst of those ideas and passions, penetrating into South Africa, have become institutionalised into the system now known as apartheid. On the other hand, it may be argued, a similar process of cultural penetration through contact gave rise also to the radical and democratic ideas of the South African opponents of apartheid. True. It is impossible, on the evidence, to weigh the overall influence of cultural exchange, setting good against bad, negative against positive, and assert absolutely — as the opponents of boycott do — that cultural exchange must be good.

But it is possible, on the evidence before our eyes, to state positively that cultural exchange *in the midst of a boycott campaign* is absolutely negative, and contrary to the interests of the black majority. At such a time, every cultural contact becomes a political act, a declaration of faith by people of intellect and influence outside that South Africa is *not* a pariah, that its practices are *not* abhorrent. Every such contact is read by white South Africans as a sign that they are tolerated and the system by which they live is acceptable. And thus every such contact becomes a bolster to strengthen support of the system of apartheid, or a tranquilliser to dampen the ardour of their hostility to it.

The point should not be overlooked that the last twenty-five years — the years of Nationalist Party rule — which have been the years of the most rapid extension of apartheid, and of the escalation of race oppression, of widespread police terror and of anti-democratic legislation, have been also the years during which foreign investment in the country has expanded most rapidly, and in which cultural contact with abroad through trade, travel and improved communications has been most extensive. The evidence, in truth, points against contact, if apartheid is to be undermined.

Why is this chorus of 'progressive' voices against the boycott being so joyfully acclaimed — some of it even assisted by State

sponsored advertising in the foreign press — by the South African government? The timing is significant. The plea for increased foreign investment comes not before but immediately *after* the commission of inquiry has exposed the totally apartheid-oriented basis of British owned industry and its labour relations — immediately after world-wide exposure of the counter-revolutionary role of foreign capital in financing Portugal's Cabora Bassa scheme in Mozambique and sanctions-breaking aid for a steel industry in Rhodesia. Pleas for British trade-union intervention in South Africa come not before, but immediately *after* mass strikes of the black workers have shaken the white establishment — including the white South African trade union hierarchy — to its foundations. The pleas for cultural interchange come not before, but immediately *after* the upsurge of militant 'black consciousness', with its strong cultural overtones.

After? Or because of these events?

At this moment, there should be no letting up of the boycott campaign, no matter what the 'progressive' anti-apartheid credentials of its critics. For within South Africa, the prospects of change begin to reach towards maturity. The people find new forms of struggle, new springs of militancy, new bonds of unity across the ethnic division lines drawn by the government. Outside the country, the guerrilla fighters advance in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. For the first time in many years, there are signs that the tide is beginning to run against apartheid. The world boycott movement cannot change South Africa from abroad — that remains for the people of South Africa themselves. But it can make the people's task easier, by setting a favourable climate for their struggles, bringing them a token of solidarity which will fortify their morale, and a token of opposition to weaken their enemies. This it has done! This it must continue to do! Especially now!

What the critics of the boycott are doing at a time when the forces for revolution are steadily growing, must count as counter-revolution. It matters not that they protest the sincerity of their anti-apartheid consciences. Those who dare to enter the political arena must be judged by the effect of their actions.

Why, our critics often ask, do we 'single out' South Africa? Is it any worse than the colonels' Greece, or Franco Spain? This is scarcely the point. The boycott movement is not based on the fact that South Africa is worse. No doubt it is. Certainly its brand of tyranny is

different, based as it is on race and colour alone, from which none can escape through any deeds of his own if once he has been condemned to it by accident of birth. South Africa, in this sense, *is* worse. In its institutionalised race oppression it is unique in all the world.

It is South Africa's unique form of race oppression which rouses the ire and disgust of ordinary people in every country on this earth. And it is thus that the call of the South African liberation movement for its country's isolation, is also special and unique; and that the response to that call has been uniquely widespread and determined. It is not a boycott movement in simple, individual disgust at a tyrannical regime, such as — for example — inhibits many democrats from travelling to Greece or Spain. The decision to boycott South Africa is based both on disgust at its system, but more particularly on the simple fact that South Africa's freedom fighters have asked for it. The boycott has been called for by all the liberation movements of all persuasions — by the African National Congress, by the S.A. Indian Congress, by the S.A. Coloured Peoples' Congress, by the S.A. Congress of Trade Unions, and the Communist Party, and so on. It is *their* judgement that the boycott helps their cause. Let us have less arrogant advice and more loyalty to that cause from those who would show themselves progressive, democratic and against apartheid.

SOUTH AFRICA'S WAR CRIMINALS

There was no doubt that the South African Government was preparing for war, said the candidate of the Social Democratic Committee, Mr. Peter Randall, during the general election campaign — the only candidate to stand on a platform of 'majority rule now'. He did not get many votes (995) from the frightened voters of Von Brandis, but that does not detract from the force of his warning against Government defence of an indefensible social system based on the power and privilege of a few and the poverty of the majority of the population.

In fact, the Vorster regime is already at war — with its own people whom it tries to subdue by terror and detention without trial, including the torture and murder of political prisoners; and with the peoples of

neighbouring states, where South African military and police units are in action in support of the beleaguered forces of Rhodesia and Portugal, and on their own behalf in Namibia.

The Johannesburg *'Star'* reported on April 3 that the army had already installed a 'burglar alarm' system in Transvaal border areas, with outposts in the smallest and most outlying villages, in anticipation of a possible 'terrorist' attack. And a week later (April 10) the paper announced that a mass 'counter-insurgency' exercise involving units from all the armed services including the police was to be staged in KwaZulu from May 19 to 25. Similar exercises have already taken place in Bantustan areas in the Transvaal and Eastern Cape.

This is the Government's way of 'showing the flag', trying to intimidate the African people by a show of force. But the South African military and police chiefs know wars are not won by weapons alone, and during April the South African press was invited to inspect a camp on a farm at Groblersdal in the Eastern Transvaal, where black policemen are trained for what is euphemistically called 'border duty'. "Black, White fight terror", screamed a headline in the *'Sunday Times'* on April 14. "Police drop colour bar in border war". The article that followed said, amongst other things, that "black and white policemen are fighting side by side against a common enemy on South Africa's borders . . . the training they (black policemen) receive — handling highly sophisticated and deadly weapons, map reading, patrolling survival — is identical to that of their white colleagues."

The article was accompanied by photographs of black policemen dressed in camouflage uniforms and carrying guns — a startling about-face for the Nationalists who screamed loudest at the suggestion during the last war that blacks should be armed so that the country's manpower could be harnessed to the full in the fight against Hitler.

The claim that the colour bar has been dropped in the 'border war' is a plain lie. Even in the training camp, black policemen live in segregated quarters, as the article admitted. But what the article omitted to point out was that every black policeman is automatically junior to every white, that black pay is lower than white pay, and that the dependants of blacks killed or wounded get less by way of compensation than the whites.

Nevertheless, it remains a fact that half of the South African police force is black, and that many blacks — Africans, Indians and Coloureds

— are now being trained and given guns to fight against our freedom fighters.

BLACK MERCENARIES

At the best of times, it is a matter of shame that blacks serve at all in the South African police force, which is merely the instrument of the state to maintain white domination, and to protect white lives and property. If a white home is burgled or a white woman is killed or raped, the whole police force is sent to track down the criminals. But blacks die every day from violence in the townships, and the police can scarcely be bothered to note down the facts in their record books.

When it comes to the so-called border war, the shame of the black policeman becomes a crime — the crime of treason to his people. Our freedom fighters are in rebellion against white domination, against the tyranny of apartheid, against the whole system of segregation and discrimination which makes life a paradise for the whites and a hell for the blacks. Our freedom fighters are not the enemies of the blacks but their allies, their liberators. They fight to bring about a new society in South Africa based on the Freedom Charter, which lays down that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, that race discrimination must be abolished in every sphere of life, that all South Africans must enjoy equal rights and opportunities.

Those blacks who join the police force and allow themselves to be used in the fight against the freedom fighters are assisting the white racists of South Africa to perpetuate their domination. Some may be misguided, others have openly sold themselves to the real enemy of their people — to the Nationalist Government and the white racists and imperialists in whose name it speaks and acts. Action is urgent to put a stop to this treachery on the part of the black policemen. They must be treated as pariahs, as outcasts and traitors; they must be persuaded to leave the force or be punished, and if necessary they must be killed — for if you don't kill them, they will kill you. For over 300 years the white racists have shown no mercy to the blacks. They stole their land, and killed them like dogs when they fought back. Even today, they torture and murder our leaders and patriots in their jails. Some of them disappear behind their walls and are never seen again.

The South African police chiefs are putting on this publicity show

because they have realised the lesson of Mozambique and Rhodesia, of Vietnam, Korea and Algeria — that the national struggle of an oppressed people cannot be defeated by military means alone. The mighty Americans were humbled by the people of Korea and Vietnam, De Gaulle pulled out of Algeria because he realised he could never win. General Spínola wrote a book (which helped to bring about the downfall of the Caetano Government) because he realised that Portugal could never hold its African colonies by force alone and would have to attempt a political solution.

The police chief General Venter who claims falsely that there is no colour bar in his border police force, gave the game away in another article in the same issue of the *'Sunday Times'*. Before retiring from the police force at the end of April, he offered some words of advice about how to deal with the 'communist threat'.

"We must not make the mistake that there are no communists in South Africa", he said. "The only way to counter the communist and terrorist threat is by keeping our men on the borders and also, but more important, uplifting our local population. We must act now to ensure that there are work opportunities for all, that everybody gets a decent education and a decent home. A contented population is the best buffer against the terrorist threat."

The whole police exercise, in other words, is part of the propaganda battle for the minds of the South Africa people. But it will take more than words to convince the black peoples of South Africa. Instead of supplying work opportunities, the Government is endorsing Africans out of towns and forcing them to join the huge pool of unemployed in the Bantustans. Instead of supplying free and equal education, the Government spends on each white schoolchild 20 times as much as on each African schoolchild. Instead of allowing blacks to fill the same jobs as white, Labour Minister Viljoen said on April 9, 1974, "that as long as the National Party governed South Africa, the colour bar would remain and job reservation would be maintained". (*'Star'* April 10, 1974.) No African is allowed to own land freehold either in the urban areas or in the Bantustans, so no African's home is his castle — he can be forced out at any time, separated from his wife and family. Hundreds of thousands of Africans have no home of any kind, but are forced to live in single-sex barracks and hostels, or in shanties of tin and sacking. 80% of the African people receive wages so low that they live

below the breadline. Every African is hounded by the pass laws every minute of every day of his life. No black is allowed to vote or stand for Parliament.

It is this barbaric race tyranny that the black policemen choose to defend in the interests of the white supremacists. Instead they should do what Lenin asked the Russian soldiers to do in 1917 – turn their weapons on their masters and use their training to help win freedom for their people.

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FRELIMO ON PORTUGAL

STATEMENT BY THE FRELIMO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

On 25 April, 1974, we learned from radio broadcasts about the coup d'état in Portugal by the armed forces which resulted in the ousting of the government of Marcelo Caetano and its replacement by a 'Junta of National Salvation'. This movement, according to its promoters is intended to provide a solution to the present crisis which the Portuguese regime and society are going through after 13 years of colonial war.

The coup d'état which has just taken place cannot be seen in isolation. It is a result of the new awareness of growing sectors of the Portuguese people that the purpose of the colonial war launched by the fascist regime is to suppress the colonised peoples' aspiration to independence and freedom and is against the desire for well-being and political and social democracy of the Portuguese people themselves.

At this time we hail, in the first place, the Portuguese democratic forces which for many years have been actively and courageously opposing the colonial war. This growing awareness is closely bound up with the affirmation of the unshakable will of the Mozambican people, and of the peoples of Angola, Guine-Bissau and Cabo Verde islands, to

achieve independence and freedom. This will have taken on material form in the armed struggle for national liberation, which has been steadily growing and has already reached vital regions of our country. The coincidence between the crisis of the regime in Portugal and the great advances of the national liberation struggle in Mozambique over the past two years is no accident, but additional proof of the impact of our struggle on the situation in Portugal. The determinant factor of the situation in Portugal and the colonies has been and still is the struggle of our peoples. And the fundamental issue upon which the solution of all other problems depends is the independence of the peoples of Mozambique, Angola and Guine-Bissau and Cabo Verde islands, as well as that of the remaining Portuguese colonies.

As far as the Portuguese people are concerned, to the extent that the principles contained in the proclamations that the leaders of the coup d'état have made up to now are put into force, this will doubtless be a step forward towards the establishment of democracy in Portugal. The young people who engaged in action aimed at putting an end to 48 years of uninterrupted dictatorship in Portugal, acting in line with the aspirations of the Portuguese people to realise their legitimate right to democracy, liberty and real independence, are the same young people who, when they were made to fight against our people, understood the unjust nature of the war in which they were engaged and the character of the regime which forced them to give up their lives for the defence of interests contrary to the interests of their people. The establishment of democracy in Portugal would be a victory for the Portuguese people, a victory at which we would rejoice.

For the Mozambican people, under the leadership of FRELIMO, the correct definition of who is the enemy has always been an essential point of principle. The enemy of the Mozambican people is not the Portuguese people, themselves victims of fascism, but the Portuguese colonial system. And an important section of the Portuguese army itself was made to understand that it was not defending the interests of its people in the colonial war when it felt the growing disaffection of Portuguese opinion with regard to the war it is waging in the colonies. If our struggle thus contributed to the Portuguese people's struggle against fascism and to win their right to democracy, FRELIMO cannot but congratulate itself for having contributed to this. But just as the Portuguese people have the right to independence and democracy, this

same right cannot be denied the Mozambican people. It is for this elementary but essential right that we are fighting. The objectives of FRELIMO are very clear: the total and complete independence of the Mozambican people and the liquidation of Portuguese colonialism. The Mozambican people are an entity quite distinct from the Portuguese people, and they have their own political, cultural and social personality which can only be realised through the independence of Mozambique.

We are not fighting to become Portuguese with black skins. We are fighting to affirm ourselves as Mozambicans, without this meaning contempt for the Portuguese people or any other people. In this respect, FRELIMO reaffirms its wish to fully co-operate with all peoples in the world on a basis of independence, equality, respect and mutual interest. FRELIMO also reaffirms that the definition of a Mozambican has nothing to do with skin colour or racial, ethnic, religious or any other origins. Members of FRELIMO are all Mozambicans who adhere to its programme of struggle against Portuguese colonialism, for the independence of Mozambique. FRELIMO is not a racist organisation and it is not waging a racist war. We reaffirm here what we declared in July 1972 when we opened a front: "On starting the struggle in Manica e Sofala where an important section of the Portuguese community in our country is established, we reaffirm that our struggle is not against them, that our victory can only benefit those who live from honest labour, those who suffer from colonial and fascist exploitation. The Mozambican people fraternally call upon the Portuguese soldiers, the Portuguese people to join the common effort of liberation. At the same time as hailing the growing support from white Mozambicans for the struggle for national liberation, we wish to warn certain sectors of the European population of Mozambique against the attempts of the ultra-racist forces, encouraged by the neighbouring racist countries, to transform our armed struggle for liberation into a total war between whites and blacks. This manoeuvre has as its purpose to make the white settlers participate actively in suppressing our people. That attitude makes them instruments of other forces and does not serve their own interests or the interests of the Mozambican people."

Freedom and independence, the affirmation of our own personality — these then are the objectives of our struggle. FRELIMO fighters are not professional soldiers. They are the Mozambican people in arms. They are, before all else, political militants who have taken up arms to

put an end to the daily violence of colonial domination, exploitation and repression. It is up to the Portuguese government to learn from past experience and understand that only through recognition of the right to independence of the Mozambican people, led by FRELIMO, their authentic and legitimate representative, will the war end. Any attempt to elude the real problem will only lead to new and equally avoidable sacrifices. The way to solve the problem is clear: recognition of the Mozambican people's right to independence. If, however, the objective of the coup d'état is to find new formulae to perpetuate the oppression of our people, then the Portuguese leaders are warned that they will face our firm determination. The Mozambican people, over 10 years of heroic armed struggle, have endured heavy sacrifices and shed the blood of their finest sons and daughters to defend the inalienable principle of their sovereignty as a free and independent nation. Politically and militarily tempered, encouraged by the growing successes of the armed struggle for national liberation, more united than ever under the leadership of FRELIMO, the Mozambican people will not retreat before any sacrifice in ensuring that their rights and fundamental aspirations triumph. We cannot accept that democracy for the Portuguese people should serve as a cover to prevent the independence of our people. Just as Caetano's era clearly demonstrated that liberal fascism does not exist, it must also be understood that there is no such thing as democratic colonialism.

At this moment it is important that all the forces in solidarity with the people of Mozambique and with the peoples of Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Cabo Verde and Sao Tome e Principe, continue their action for the recognition of our right to complete independence. They must remain vigilant in the face of any manoeuvres aimed at blocking the process of our total liberation coming not only from the Portuguese government, but from the regimes in South Africa and racist Rhodesia. It is also essential that the forces which support our struggle step up their assistance of every kind to the liberation movements, so that with the end of Portuguese colonialism, the aspirations of our peoples, which are those of all of mankind may be fulfilled.

INDEPENDENCE OR DEATH!
WE SHALL WIN!
THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES!
27 April, 1974

“BANTU INDEPENDENCE” the phoney clash

By Z. Nkosi

The run up to the April all-white General Election provided the occasion for further manoeuvres on the Bantustan question by white politicians and those appointed by them to run the so-called homelands. In the Transkei Legislative Assembly on March 25, 1974, the Chief Minister Kaiser Matanzima introduced a motion asking the South African Government to grant the territory independence within five years. A few days later, Prime Minister Vorster replied as though he had been waiting for the signal.

“We said time and time again over the years”, he told an election meeting at Heidelberg, “that the homelands would have independence if they wanted it. Our opponents said we were bluffing, that we were not honest, that we did not mean it”.

Vorster claimed he had always maintained he was ready to negotiate whenever requested to do so by a homeland authority.

“The Transkei have now said that they want to negotiate. I will negotiate with them and it is logical to accept that the Transkei

will become independent within the next five years. This is the logical outcome of the policy of the Nationalist Party”.

What Vorster did not tell his audience was that Matanzima's motion had asked for independence on certain conditions — that all the land promised under the 1936 Land Act be granted to the territory within five years; and that such a grant should not prejudice the right of the Transkei to other 'white' districts it had claimed, including Maclear, Elliot and Mount Currie in East Griqualand.

Matanzima also asked that a recess committee should be appointed, consisting of 26 members of his Legislative Assembly, with himself as chairman, to draft constitutional proposals to be tabled before the House of Assembly in Cape Town declaring the Transkei an independent state; to consider the financial implications of independence; to establish the boundaries of an independent Transkei; to consider the implications of independence on chieftainship, and the possibility of amalgamation with the Ciskei.

On the face of it, the conditions laid down by Matanzima would seem to make the grant of independence by the South African Government impossible. Time and again, Vorster and other Cabinet Ministers have made it plain that once the 1936 land promises have been carried out, not a further acre of land will be added to any of the homelands. The issue was raised directly with Vorster at the so-called “summit meeting” between him and the homeland leaders in the first week of March, 1974. Every single delegate stressed that they could not exercise independence unless they got more land. Vorster replied that he was bound by the 1936 Act. He is, of course, free to change the Act any time he wants to. But he was merely telling the delegates that he did not want to and would not — because of course he has his own party to answer to; and White landowners are already fiercely hostile to the Government's land consolidation proposals to fulfil the 1936 Act.

Not surprisingly, the official statement on the summit meeting stressed that, although Vorster had repeated the Government view that the homeland leaders were free to request independence at any time, “no such request was raised”. The plain fact of the matter is that the Government is making an offer which it knows the homeland leaders cannot accept; while for their part, the homeland leaders continue to demand ‘independence’ knowing that their conditions cannot be fulfilled. For it is not only Matanzima who demands more land.

For example, on March 24, 1974, KwaZulu's Chief Minister Gatsha Buthelezi emphasised "that even if the Republic gave KwaZulu all the land promised under the 1936 Land and Trust Act, the land would not be adequate to make KwaZulu a country which could stand on its own". (*'Star'* March 25, 1974.) He also demanded full control by KwaZulu of its coastline and territorial waters.

And again, on March 27, 1974, Chief Lucas Mangope of Bophutha-Tswana, told his Legislative Assembly that "the minimum conditions for independence included a 'more equitable' distribution of land and a greater share of South Africa's wealth". (*'Rand Daily Mail'* March 28, 1974.)

Nor is it only Vorster who has turned down requests for more land. In several election speeches, the Minister of Bantu Administration, Mr. M.C. Botha, has assured his white audiences that the Government has "no intention of handing more land to the blacks than laid down in the 1936 Land Act". (*'Rand Daily Mail'* March 1 and 29, April 4, 1974).

The Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration, Mr. A.J. Raubenheimer, has said: "We can't take the expanding African population into consideration. If we did we would have to continue handing over land until there was not enough left for the whites". (*'Sunday Times'*, February 3, 1974.)

Dr. C. Mulder, Minister of the Interior and tipped as Vorster's successor, has told an election meeting that even consolidation of the homelands is physically impossible, adding that it is not really necessary. "As for the homeland leaders' present demands for more land, we will never go beyond the terms of the 1936 Act", he said.

DEADLINE TO WHAT?

Nevertheless, that five-year deadline to 'independence' set by both Vorster and Matanzima introduces a new element into the situation. It would be as well for democrats both inside and outside South Africa to take another hard look at the possibility that the Bantustans may well have some sort of 'independence' foisted on them whether they or we like it or not. It may become necessary both for the credibility of Vorster and the Bantustan leaders themselves, with their own followers.

It may become necessary if South Africa is to have any hope of staving off international action against her.

The Transkei is likely to be the first victim of the 'independence' experiment. It is the oldest Bantustan, having received so-called 'self-government' in 1963. Though not a single tract of land, it is not as badly fragmented as, for example, KwaZulu. It at least has a 'capital' city, Umtata, with some buildings in it, unlike most other Bantustans which have nothing which can be shown to curious visitors as a symbol of statehood. Were Vorster to confer 'independence' on the Transkei in five years time, however farcical, he would bring off a coup which would have profound national and international repercussions. In the words of the Foreign minister Dr. H. Muller in a speech last March: "the homelands could play a vital role in turning back the tide of hostile world opinion." (*Rand Daily Mail*, March 5, 1974.)

Meaningful independence for the Transkei is, of course, out of the question. For one thing, the Transkei itself couldn't afford it. At the session of the Legislative Assembly at which he introduced his independence motion, Matanzima also introduced a Budget providing for the expenditure of R70 million — a 25 per cent increase over the previous year. Of this R70 million, less than R10 million is raised from domestic sources; the rest comes from the South African Government.

And the Minister of Bantu Administration, Mr. M.C. Botha, made it clear at a Nationalist Party meeting in Maritzburg on April 4, 1974, that the Government would withdraw its subsidy to any 'independent' Bantustan that adopted policies unacceptable to the South African Government. (*Star*, April 5, 1974.)

Furthermore, the Minister said before any Bantustan Government was granted 'independence', it would have to sign a treaty giving the South African Government powers to steer developments along lines it approved of. As for United Nations membership, he said: "If they want to join the United Nations they are at liberty to do so. But if they decide not to, and want us to represent them, we will do so." Once again, the implication is clear that, because no Bantustan could afford to maintain a UN representative in the face of South African displeasure, the Vorster Government expects the 'independent' Bantustans voluntarily to ask it to represent them at the UN.

And the prospects of economic development? Not surprisingly, M.C. Botha said the Bantustans and South Africa would always be economi-

cally 'interdependent'. In a publication earlier this year, South Africa's Industrial Development Corporation boasted that from 1960 to June 1973 it had authorised R163 million for industrial establishment and development in 'decentralised areas' (i.e., border areas as well as homelands), creating 60,000 jobs of which 48,000 were filled by residents of African homelands. In the homelands themselves, Mr. M.C. Botha told Mrs. Suzman in the House of Assembly last February, R4,582,000 was invested in 1973 by private entrepreneurs on an agency basis. Most of this went to the Transkei (R2.2 million), BophuthaTswana (R1.2 million), and KwaZulu (R709,000). In the process, 3,828 jobs were created, mostly in the Transkei (875), BophuthaTswana (1,776) and KwaZulu (592).

"Decentralisation can't even keep up with homelands job creation requirements", the *'Financial Mail'* commented on January 18, 1974. "The net effect of the first decade (1960-1970) of conscious decentralisation was to increase the proportion of manufacturing employment in border areas and homelands by a mere 1% (from 11.8% to 12.8%).

"Calculations based on the 1970 census are that 59,500 African males enter homeland labour markets each year. It's also been calculated that industries employing 16,000 Africans could decentralise each year, which would mean 34,500 jobs needed each year in other spheres."

The only other spheres available are South Africa's mines, farms and industries, and both the Bantustan leaders and the South African Government know this very well. A paper presented to the Institute of Race Relations' annual conference last January by Natal University Research Fellow Gavin Maasdorp pointed out that the true measure of development is the scale of poverty, unemployment and income inequality — not the number of foreign-owned factories. Poverty is widespread, he emphasised, more particularly in rural areas — in the Transkei and Ciskei 88% of household incomes are below the poverty datum line. Malnutrition and infant mortality are rife.

The practical effect of promoting the Bantustans to independence, said Maasdorp, would be "to transform almost half the African population into residents of less developed countries, thereby shattering any hopes they might have had of a more equitable share in the economy they have helped to develop".

There are many in the Transkei, of course, who see through this independence double-talk. Mr. Joseph Kobo, general secretary of the oppo-

sition Democratic Party of the Transkei, stated that the Transkei independence plan proposed by Matanzima could result in economic disaster for the territory.

Mr. Kobo said independence, at a time when the Transkei's unemployment figure was estimated to reach half-a-million, could be regarded as the "second national suicide of the Xhosa people in South Africa's history". He claimed this was the predominant view of Transkeians to whom he had spoken on a tour of South Africa's urban areas. Independence for the Transkei, he said, could only come about when the territory had reached some measure of viability.

"After seven years the Transkei is still not near that objective and it will not be near it even in 10 years' time. Of what use will independence be when the Transkei is still completely dependent on grants from the Republic? The Transkei cannot afford to rely on guarantees given by white South Africa, because promises have been made in the past and nearly all of them have been broken." (*Star*, April 9, 1974.)

Perhaps he had in mind those policies and promises Matanzima set out in his election manifesto in August, 1973, when preparing for the Transkei's third election.

"I submit that the policy of separate development, now the basis for future development of all homelands, has demonstrated that if carried out to its logical conclusion it will demonstrate to the world that black and white in South Africa can live together peacefully."

To achieve this goal, he said, certain principles would have to be accepted by all races: that South Africa belonged to black and white equally and all its wealth should be shared without discrimination; that homelands should be developed to full independence; and that the allocation to each homeland of territory proportionate to its population is basic to such independence.

Clearly, in the light of his own independence motion in the Transkei Assembly as well as the declarations of the Vorster Government, these principles have already been consigned to the scrap heap.

But it is not only as economic units that the Bantustans are not independently viable since they constitute an inseparable part of the South African economy. It is also as political entities that they are not viable. Let us record a few hard facts.

The whole Bantustan concept was imposed by the whites on the blacks, who were never consulted in any meaningful way.

Not a single Bantustan government has come into being as the result of a free and fair election, and not a single Bantustan leader came into power by popular vote.

All the Bantustan assemblies have a majority of Government-appointed and Government-paid chiefs to ensure that Government policy is adhered to. In the case of the Transkei, at the last election only 42 per cent of the electorate bothered to go to the polls. Matanzima was elected Chief Minister by his Assembly by 78 votes to 21, with support from 53 of the 65 nominated members, but from only 25 of the 45 elected members.

In the case of nearly half of the Bantustans, including KwaZulu, so far no election of any kind has taken place. Chief Gatsha Buthelezi may be a very popular man, given maximum publicity by the South African press as though he were the natural spokesman of South Africa's black people; but to date not a single vote has been cast for him and he has no claim to a popular mandate of any kind.

Most of the Bantustans are police states, in which the South African security police hold sway. The Transkei has been under emergency rule ever since the Pondo revolt of 1960, and Matanzima has regularly asked for the emergency laws to remain in force, admitting that without them he would be unable to remain in office. At the request of Buthelezi emergency law was introduced in the Msinga area of KwaZulu. Buthelezi stated that the white police were acting as his government's agents to resolve an "intolerable situation", the nature of which was never made clear.

The emergency laws which apply to the Bantustans include powers to arrest and detain without trial, to order the banishment of recalcitrants and the destruction of their homes, to prohibit meetings — in other words, to stifle and smash any opposition. At its meeting in November 1973, the Transkei Assembly passed a motion asking the South African Government, as a matter of urgency, for powers to maintain law and order and to combat 'subversion' without consulting the central government.

RULE WITHOUT POWER

The Bantustan Governments are a mere facade behind which the South African Government's seconded white officials continue to hold

the reins of power. Even in the Transkei, each of the seven departments of state falling under the authority of the Transkei Assembly is still ruled by a white secretary, though each department also has a black minister who makes the speeches on the floor of the Assembly. In the Bantustans, no black is able to exercise any authority over any white.

A Lebowa Government commission of inquiry into the employment and grading of Lebowa's civil servants and into the human relations between black and white officials, tabled its report in the Lebowa Legislative Assembly on April 17, 1974. This was another revelation of the fact that this so-called 'self-government' in the Bantustans is merely a facade for continued white rule.

The report stated that the commission's original terms of reference had to be abandoned after the Minister of Bantu Administration, Mr. M.C. Botha, told the Lebowa Government that it was not competent to investigate the employment and grading of *white* staff, and forbade *white* officials to co-operate with the commission.

One reason for the investigation was that since Lebowa was given 'self-government' towards the end of 1971, no fewer than 11 African graduates and 50 matriculants had resigned from the Lebowa civil service.

The commission reported on working conditions in five of the six Lebowa Government departments — the inquiry into the Education Department had not at that stage begun.

It questioned 532 African civil servants and found that —

- 19 had been assaulted by white officials seconded to Lebowa from Pretoria;
- 124 had had 'serious quarrels' with white seconded officials;
- 231 of 759 resignations in all grades were because of 'ill-treatment' by whites;
- More than one third said relations with white seconded officials were bad;
- Three quarters said that the whites were not preparing blacks to take over white jobs;
- Only one quarter had received any form of training while in the service. ('Star', April 17, 1974.)

More than half of the African population of South Africa live and work in the white areas, and even on suspect government figures, at least one third may be taken as permanently resident there. The claim of the Bantustan leaders to represent *all* Africans belonging to their tribal

group, even those permanently resident outside the Bantustan, has no basis in reality, and is leading to new division in the ranks of the African people.

In the Transkei elections, the bulk of the abstentions came from the voters in the white areas. In addition, such African leaders as are allowed to speak in the towns repeatedly reject the authority of the Bantustan leaders. Typical is a speech by Mr. Michael Ranthe, a social worker, who in an address to a meeting of Verligte Action in Pretoria last March, stressed that urban Africans "dream of a united African nation", reject the ethnic division on which the Bantustans are based, and can never accept homeland chiefs as their real leaders. (*'Star'*, March 29, 1974.)

Those Bantustan leaders whose voices are heard in South Africa today are the licensed practitioners of apartheid, however much they may protest their opposition to it in theory. Buthelezi is allowed to criticise apartheid only in return for condemning 'terrorism', the 'boycott South Africa' decisions of the United Nations and the O.A.U.; and for calling repeatedly for foreign trade with and investment in South Africa.

Dismissing white voters' fears that independent Bantustans will constitute a security risk, Vorster told an election meeting in April that there was not one homeland leader who was not opposed to communism and terrorism. "They know that not only our throats will be cut, but also the throats of their chiefs and headmen", he said. (*'Rand Daily Mail'* and *'Star'*, April 5, 1974.)

Addressing the Transkei Assembly a few days earlier, Kaiser Matanzima expressed his government's "unshakeably strong attitude" against communism and terrorism. The terrorists, he said, "call themselves freedom fighters. But who do they want to free and if anybody is to be freed why then by violence and revolutionary means?"

This from a man whose own position is based on both the violence of the white South African Government and the violence of his own black government!

Yet, the statements of Vorster and the Bantustan leaders do help to make their strategy clear. The United Party has often criticised apartheid because it prevents the development of a black middle class which would have a vested interest in maintaining the South African way of life, and would support the white man boss against any threat from a revolutionary black proletariat. But Vorster is busy creating such a

class in the Bantustans — not a social class in the marxist sense, but a gaggle of government ministers and officials, of petty shopkeepers, garage owners and the like who benefit from 'separate development'. In advertisements in the foreign press, the Government says: "The road to independence is not reserved for politicians. The Bantu Investment and other corporations (all white — Ed.) are promoting black capitalism in these homelands with direct financial assistance", and claims that the Bantu Investment Corporation has in the past 10 years assisted more than 1,000 'Bantu concerns' with direct loans, and approximately 2,000 through commercial credits. (One such advertisement headed "Habakuk Shikwane is a Black Capitalist" was published in the London *'Evening News'* on February 19, 1974.)

It is to these people that Vorster looks to defend the Bantustan set-up and the white government behind it against the freedom fighters, and against the masses who look to them and their banned organisations, the ANC and the Communist Party, to lead them to real freedom.

Matanzima is not alone in condemning terrorism. In April Chief Filemon Elifas, the Chief Minister of Owambo — where SWAPO supporters, men and women alike, are publicly stripped and flogged into unconsciousness by tribal police acting on his orders — announced that his government had "voluntarily donated R30,000 to combat communism and terrorism". (*'Rand Daily Mail'* April 4, 1974.) The Coloured Council of South West Africa, another of Vorster's stooge organisations, passed a unanimous resolution on the same day attacking terrorism and condemning any form of aid to terrorists in Southern Africa. (*'Rand Daily Mail'* April 5, 1974.)

Vorster outlined his grand strategy in a speech in the House of Assembly in Cape Town on February 4, 1974:

"It is clear that South Africa is so situated geographically that it is in the interest of all here that a power bloc should be created. It will have to be a bloc of independent states which will not be subservient to one another politically or constitutionally. I foresee — and here Chief Lucas Mangope, head of the Tswana homeland, also thinks as I do — an economic power bloc, a power bloc against communism".

The Prime Minister said there would always be mutual economic independence between the states of Southern Africa; and Rhodesia, Botswana and other neighbouring territories, as well as the Bantu homelands in the Republic, would have a role to play.

It is in pursuance of this white supremacist 'power bloc' that the Transkei is being pushed towards some form of 'independence' in five years time, with the other Bantustans following suit as soon as some sort of workable apparatus can be fashioned for them.

Against that plot against the interests of the people of South Africa — black and white — the Communist Party has counterposed the real alternative — not phoney 'independence' of puppet Bantustans, but real liberation of the country by struggle against apartheid. In the words of a recent Central Committee statement:

"Unity of the oppressed Black people is a fundamental pre-condition for liberation. There can be no compromise with a policy which serves to turn the clock back and divides the people once again along ethnic lines. Change in our country depends upon the mobilisation and action of our oppressed people with the Black working class as its most advanced instrument; it cannot be brought about by those who hold office at the pleasure of the white state. Their limited horizons lead them to confuse their own impotence with that of the people, and to spread despair, timidity and unprincipled compromise . . .

On the whole, especially in the context of the growing mood of militancy and resistance, the record of the Bantustans shows that to a greater or lesser degree each one of them is playing a harmful and diversionary role. They will continue to do so unless the people led by their movements take a hand — as they did in Namibia, where the Ovambos almost unanimously and contemptuously rejected the Bantustan proposals in the recent elections when only 1.6% of the total electorate voted . . .

We must reject totally the ideology which sees the Bantustans as enclaves of independence from which further advances can be made."

THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA

by Vladimir Shundeyev

The 'non-capitalist way' and the socialist-oriented countries are objects of close scrutiny. Marxist authors are looking into many of the economic and political aspects, and generalising on the available, albeit still meagre, experience. Much attention is devoted to the revolutionary-democratic parties and regimes in documents of the world Communist movement. Understandably so, for Communists and revolutionary democrats are in the same world-wide anti-imperialist stream. Besides, the experience of the various socialist-oriented countries, now in a transitional stage of political, social and economic development, is highly varied. And coming to any of these lands and seeing the life of their peoples at first hand, the first thing you do is look around and see how certain of the theoretical studies and generalisations fit in with the real picture.

The Guinean Republic has had fifteen years of independence, while the record of the Democratic Party of Guinea (DPG), the country's leading force, goes back more than a quarter of a century. All this time has been one of tension-filled struggle against international and home reaction, and of constructive labour by the country's five million citizens, overcoming the painful legacy of colonial rule, tribal strife, parasitism and bureaucratic corruption.

GLIMPSES OF GUINEA



You tune into the republic's political wavelength the moment you come to the highway leading from the airport to the capital. Along several kilometres of the road slogan-inscribed streamers say: "The Nation Makes Revolution For Itself", "Democratic Guinea Will Never Accept Foreign Domination", "Parasitism is a Brake on Economic Growth", "Step Up the Class Struggle", "Ideology is a Stable Base For People and the Nation", "Revolutionary Education Centres (REC) and Local Revolutionary Power (LRP) are Cornerstones of the Revolution", etc. But more important than what the slogans say is what lies behind them or, let us say, the actual securities for them. Doubly so, because some of them may bewilder a newcomer. What are the REC and LRP, and what part do they play in society? What is the ideology suggested as a "base for people and the nation"? What are the implications of the call to step up the class struggle in a society where the DPG proclaimed itself to be a party of the whole people, actuated by the idea of "democratic dictatorship", which its leadership defines as "a concentration of popular power".

Animated and noisy Conakry is a city of smiles. Some are inclined to impute its ebullience to the Africans' proverbial "light-heartedness". Yet facts show differently.

Not light-heartedness, but a firm determination to overcome, coupled with hatred for colonialism, assured success in the battle for national independence and enabled the people of Guinea to blaze the trail to freedom in what was French Tropical Africa.

Just over three years ago the nation showed that it could be stern when repulsing an imperialist incursion. A 27-metre-high monument has been erected as a reminder of this. At its unveiling last November 22, President Ahmed Sekou Toure described revolution as "a continuous offensive", calling on the nation to be vigilant. No sooner were these words reported in the press than information arrived of plans for a fresh aggression, set for December 1 from the neighbouring Portuguese-occupied territory of Guinea-Bissau. And though life in the city remained normal, you could not help noticing the quicker pulse of the governing party's executive apparatus, the Council of Ministers gathering at short notice, and patrols appearing on roads leading to the capital.

True, the people know no abundance, the economy is in difficulties, the state sector is still weak, food shortages are considerable, and the purchasing power of the national currency not very high. But the fact that people have not fallen into scepticism and apathy, that they give vent to exuberance, is evidence of their faith in the future and in the country's chosen path.

EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

What is probably one of the most frequent and pleasant impressions of Conakry is that made by the many little bands of children — books under their arms, clad in school uniforms, and — here it is again — smiling. A mere fifteen years ago Guinea's population was almost totally illiterate. Not more than 5-10 per cent of the children were able to attend primary school.

What has happened in education and the training of national personnel over these years?

Mamadi Keita, member of the DPG's National Political Bureau and Coordinating Minister of Education and Culture (we talked in the

presence of Luis Olie, Minister of Higher Education, and two inspector-generals of the Ministry), described the conditions in which his Party set out to democratise education literally on the day following independence. Departing after the Guineans' "No" to the French Constitution in the 1958 referendum, the colonialists took along all school equipment, teaching aids, and teachers. If you want independence, they said, be independent. At that time the new Guinean Republic had one secondary school with 2,500 pupils in Conakry, primary schools with an enrolment of 40,000, six specialists with a university-level education, and not a single higher educational establishment.

The DPG called on the towns and villages to open schools everywhere, because the country sorely needed personnel — personnel closely linked with the people, with the country's life. Crash courses were held to train teachers. All pupils, from the ninth grade up, received 24 months of teachers' training. All more or less educated people were called in to teach.

Peasants, the overwhelming majority of the population, became an object of special concern: they had to be taught to read and write, had to learn joint cooperative farming. This is where the RECs, the wide-open state schools, and the LRPs, — the local primary DPG bodies — proved their mettle. In bringing up new people in Guinea, Keita said, the most complicated thing was to alter their thinking, root out the remnants of the colonial past, and impart working habits and the habit of collective ownership.

Certainly fifteen years is not enough to radically alter the cultural image of a society. Yet changes are visible. Schoolchildren total as many as 300,000 (and will pass the 580,000 mark by the end of the recently launched five-year plan), teachers over 8,000, and secondary schools, known as lyceums, over 250. Those are impressive figures for a country with a population of 5 million, and more so since education is free.

TRAINING NEW SPECIALISTS

Guinea has 5,500 students, of whom 4,000 are in Conakry's Polytechnical Institute and the rest in the Kankan Higher Pedagogical School. The Polytechnical Institute's eleven departments graduate some

400 specialists annually, and by the end of the five-year plan (1978) the student body will rise to 6,000.

There has been a radical advance in the quality of education since the Polytechnical Institute graduated its first group of students (the Lenin group): under the direction of a Soviet professor three post-graduates are about to defend theses on subjects relevant to the national economy — three young researchers developing for the first time on their own Guinean soil. The reference here to Guinean education is not nationalistic but class-oriented. This is what Keita implied when speaking of achievements, difficulties and the perspectives of the Party's work in education. Hence this other innovation: nowadays every Polytechnical Institute graduate has at least a fortnight's supplementary training — one week with the people's militia, and another week at DPG theoretical courses. A young man is easily taught to handle a rifle, the Minister explained, but a guarantee is needed that he will point it in the right direction. That requires ideological education.

Under the state plan 9-10 thousand specialists with a higher and secondary education were to be trained by 1971. Was the target reached? The domestic end of the scheme worked well, came the answer: But the practice of sending students abroad proved unsuccessful.

Over ten years ago, when foreign companies were allowed to operate in Guinea, the government set the condition that each such firm should train a definite number of Guinean specialists. From the outset, Keita said, we insisted on faithful fulfilment of this condition. However, earlier on we overlooked some important aspects of this policy. The mixed American-Guinean Bauxites de Bokè, for example, yearly sent several of its workers to study abroad. Most of them did not return. So we were compelled to insist that the company set up a school in Bokè, provide the equipment, and train personnel on the spot. The international Fria Company trains a certain number of technicians, office secretaries and typists locally; but specialists of a more specific type are still being sent to France, and many do not come back. The Soviet building trust, Bauxitstroï, which is constructing a Guinean mining enterprise in Kindia, relatively close to the capital, is a different matter: it operates a permanent technical school, which issued its first hundred diplomas to Guinean graduates in 1970, supplying valuable

reinforcements to the country's labour force, essential for consolidating the national economy.

SOCIALIST PLANNING

The socialist orientation in the economy impelled the conversion to state planning and centralised use of the means of production and the country's resources.

How much of the material and technical base was built under the three-year (1960-63) and seven-year (1964-71) plans? What were the difficulties? What are the cardinal problems of the recently launched five-year plan? These questions to Allion Drame, Minister of Planning and Statistics.

The three-year plan, he replied, was our first attempt at applying planning to a backward economy, repatterning the colonial structure and building elements of an "administrative infrastructure". By and large, the attempt was successful. The state took over the crucial sectors of the economy. We built an airport in Conakry, and a motor-road, hotel, stadium and the country's first national enterprise in Mamou. We also began building a hydropower station (completed under the seven-year plan). The introduction of our own currency, the Guinean franc, and withdrawal from the French franc zone helped our planning substantially. (Now, the Guinean franc has a new name, 'sili', and it is striking how proud Guineans are to have their own national currency.)

The seven-year plan set more specific targets, with the main accent on food production. We built several processing plants, a textile mill, match factory, and a cannery, and expanded the working of natural resources. But not all the targets were reached. Electric power output was only 84 per cent of planned; and in other fields, especially agriculture, the percentages were also substantially lower. The difficulties we encountered in bringing the peasants into cooperatives were more serious than we had expected.

This is why we are now devoting special attention to cooperative farming. The Minister said expanding farm production was the No. 1 problem of the present five-year plan, designed to end the country's dependence on imported food. Centralised investments in agriculture,

some 2,000 million sili out of the planned total of 60,000 million, are relatively modest. The sights are set on decentralised development. The responsibility for it has been placed essentially on the local revolutionary authorities. Wide use is envisaged of the experience of the model farms (along the lines of the livestock farms established with Soviet help) to provide practical skills for running cooperatives. A large number of cooperative labour teams is planned of specialists, students, and all possessing the necessary elementary knowledge. In the coming five years it is thus envisaged to resettle 33,700 cooperative farmers in what are here called socialist townships. A new Ministry of Agriculture and Production Teams has been formed to coordinate this effort. The revolutionary education centres — run on the 'learn while you work, work while you learn' principle — have been assigned a more prominent place in the cooperative movement. So far, however, the food problem is still acute. The shortages are many, and much has to be imported.

DISTRIBUTING THE GOODS

Whatever part of the world you come to, you look at the shopping facilities to get an idea of the consumption pattern. Conakry has no modern department or chain stores, and no supermarkets. It has sprawling old-time markets, small shops and a host of street-vendors, often mere boys, selling matches, cigarettes, tooth-paste, ballpoint pens, fruit, and sundry other items, from early morning until deep into the night. The multitude of petty middlemen filling in the breaches in the organised retail network are evidently a peculiar result of the Africanisation of personnel in retailing, lacking funds, facilities, experience and a large enough domestic market to build up commerce on a larger scale. The finest Conakry workshop manufacturing, buying and selling local artifacts is merely a large room with modest additional facilities, staffed by the owner (also a woodcarver) and his family.

Is there some system of rationing commodities?

Yes, Minister Drame said; commodities are distributed under a centralised scheme. Imported necessities, for example, are strictly rationed from top to bottom, and supplied through the state stores in town and village. Imported rice is mainly distributed in urban areas, for peasants are expected to grow their own. Villagers get sugar, soap,

cloth, and the like. A special national commission, on which all sections of the population are represented, sets the rations according to the size of the local population and its needs. Locally, distribution is controlled by the LRPs.

In sum, the Minister said, the main directions of the present five-year plan are:

- to increase food production;
- to develop new natural resources for industrial development, passing from extraction to local processing of raw materials; in particular, to build aluminium mills;
- to build up production of export crops — pineapples, bananas, citrus fruit, coffee, and the like.

How is the plan financed and what is the ratio between internal and external sources of investment?

Agriculture is financed internally, Drame said. The state also allocates large sums to industry, the infrastructure, education and social welfare. There are 75 state enterprises.

However, the bulk of the funds comes from outside. Under the five-year plan, outside funds are expected to finance about 65 per cent of the investments, chiefly in mining and the power industry. This applies mainly to funds used by mixed companies in working the country's natural resources. Approximately half their assets and 65 per cent of their profits belong to the state. The presidents of mixed companies are always Guineans, while the technical chiefs are foreign specialists. Port facilities, the railways and the mining equipment are owned by the state, and rented to the companies. The latter are committed to build processing plants on completing the development of extraction of raw materials. In sum, the Minister held, such foreign companies pose no threat to the national economy, because the state can veto any decision they may take.

TOWARDS IDEOLOGY

The Party speaks extensively of ideological education and ideological struggle. What is meant by ideology as the base for people and nations? Inspector-Minister Lansan Diane, permanent secretary of the National

Political Bureau of the DPG, stressed the popular nature of the Party, and singled out two phases in its ideological work.

The first phase refers to the period from the party's foundation until independence — a time when the leadership and the minority committed to the Party's aims espoused Marxism-Leninism as its ideology, but did not speak of it publicly. We did not forget that socialism is our aim, but concentrated first and foremost on winning independence, rallying the people against the colonialists. It was therefore enough to be an anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist to become a member of the DPG.

The second phase set in after independence. We adopted democratic centralism in structuring the party. The ideological struggle was directed not only against imperialism, but also against the feudal lords, clans, tribalism, small capitalist traders exploiting the people, and private acquisition of wealth. The ideological struggle is everywhere, especially in the villages. Its aim is the broadest possible political, economic and cultural democracy, eliminating ties between the enemy at home and abroad.

Understandably, we cannot build socialism at the rate we should like. There is no sufficiently large material-technical base for this, not enough collective enterprise, and not enough national unity. Mass education in the Marxist-Leninist spirit and use of world experience encounters substantial difficulties traceable to Guinea's peculiar conditions.

It is important to determine the stage of development of the various groups in our society, what kind of relations they are associated with — tribal, class, feudal or petty capitalist — and to shape our ideological work accordingly, introducing elements of the socialist outlook into the mass consciousness. That is the purport of democratic ideological education for the whole people.

Our party courses follow this line in different forms throughout the country, imparting to the masses a fundamental knowledge of the world revolutionary process, the problems of the Communist and working-class movement, and exposing the motives of anti-communism. And in so doing we turn for help to ideological cadres of the Marxist-Leninist parties.

The view of the ideological struggle in Guinea gets clearer when you hear or read statements of the Party leadership.

At the time of independence, Keita said, the country had many parties. But the majority of the people supported the DGP — 57 out of the 60 National Assembly deputies were from our Party. Our main problem was to combat the external threat. This knitted the people together. The slogans of national democracy were everybody's slogans. The 8th Party Congress in 1964 proved to be a watershed: the phase of national-democratic development was over, and we embarked on socialist-oriented development. It was no accident, therefore, that the Congress also outlined the course of intensified class struggle. While fighting imperialism and colonialism, there had been total accord in the country, but gradually it became evident that the Party's solutions for many of the domestic problems were not to everybody's liking. So, in addition to the external enemy there appeared the concept of internal enemy.

Did this mean that the nature of the all-national party would have to change, and its membership decline in the course of the class struggle?

Not at all, said Keita. The demands not to exploit labour, to cut out shady deals, cherish the people's aims, to work for the socialist orientation, are addressed to Party leaders, not the DPG rank and file. The Party must be a mass party.

To understand the character of the class struggle, Diane said, you must remember that we debunk the mystique of power. Feudal power was that kind of power, and it has vanished. The very idea of power being a mystic force must disappear. Power, from its most primary form upwards, must be fused with the people. And that is what we are determined to achieve, seeking mass participation in analysing, discussing and adopting decisions at all levels of leadership.

We had no developed capitalism, no capitalists, and no capitalist ideologists. Neither did we have a proletariat. There are still very few workers. The social structure of our society has not yet crystallised. All we have are potential classes, and often these exist only in our minds. The bourgeois elements, the merchants, are an as yet incipient class. And we must impede its growth. Or take the peasant. He is not revolutionary by nature. It is up to us to bring him up in a revolutionary spirit. Certainly, the factory proletariat is the basis of the socialist orientation. But we have no large factories so far. The main thing now is to eliminate the basis for the exploitation of man by man.

The concept of a 'fifth column' has come into circulation in Guinea in recent years. It is applied to bribe-takers, responsible for corrupting the present administrative apparatus, and to people who exploit public posts for private ends. It also applies to the remnants of the old bureaucratic machine, the lower officialdom, elements of the trading bourgeoisie, part of the French-educated officers' corps, and old generation pro-Western diplomats.

In one of his latest public speeches, the President of the Guinean Republic called on the people to combat the 'fifth column', which disrupts the Party's efforts to build a new society. We applied to meet Ahmed Sekou Toure, President of the Republic and Secretary-General of the DPG, on this score — the stepped up class struggle, the plans of fortifying economic independence, and the achievements and difficulties. But the interview was very short. The President was unable to set aside time for our talk, for on the following day he was to open the statutory national economic conference, outlining concrete actions to improve the economy and work out an action programme for today and the immediate future jointly with the top administrators of state enterprises and ministries. No question is more topical for the country today than that of constructively fortifying the national economy through consolidation of the state sector.

The Democratic Party had accomplished a great thing by ending colonialism, uniting the people on an anti-imperialist basis, and destroying the pillars of feudal and tribal relations. Its present task is immeasurably more difficult: to build the basis of the new society.

CHRISTIANITY & APARTHEID

by J. Villiers

The Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society (SPROCAS) was established in South Africa in 1969 and wound itself up at the end of 1973. In those four years Sprocas published – or was involved in the publishing of – about 28 books and pamphlets which enjoyed a total circulation of over 70,000 copies, plus eight brief background papers (circulation 30,000) and various other study aids, posters and dossiers. The whole operation (including the “Black Community Programme”) cost over R200,000 – practically all of it supplied by church-based organisations (mostly Protestant) in Western Europe, especially West Germany, Norway, Sweden, Holland and Britain.

By any standard relevant to South Africa, Sprocas represented a big publishing programme. Most, if not all of its output was political in essence, though covering such varied fields as economics, sociology, theology, and literature. What is more, the general character of the whole output was democratic, and anti-apartheid in essence.

Many of the leading activists closely connected with Sprocas, who expressed themselves politically through the discussion groups and

publications of Sprocas, have been punished for their impudence by the Vorster regime in its usual ruthless ways. They have been harassed and persecuted by the Schlebusch Commission and the ensuing trials of those who refused to give evidence to it. Passports have been withdrawn, travel documents refused, homes raided, telephones tapped and questions asked by the Special Branch and their informer network.

Sprocas provided a meeting ground for a variety of political people—white liberals (whether of the old Liberal Party or of the Progressive Party variety), Black Consciousness advocates, Bantu homeland spokesmen, radical Christians of all races, student militants both black and white, anti-apartheid academics from the English-medium universities and tribal colleges, lawyers, politicians, journalists varying in hue from Nationalist maverick Denis Worrall through ‘verligte’ UP (e.g. Japie Basson) to Alan Paton, the late Leo Marquard and Donald Woods of the *East London Despatch*, and even a couple of trade unionists.

The scale of the Sprocas undertaking and the breadth of its composition make it worthwhile to look back on its record, to set this short period in its historical context, and examine its relationship to the liberation struggle of the African and other oppressed peoples.

BACKGROUND AND ORIGINS

It is impossible to grasp the peculiar significance of Sprocas without reference to the outlawing of the SA Communist Party in 1950, the banning of the African National Congress (and also the Pan-Africanist Congress) in 1960 and of the Congress of Democrats in 1962, the suppression of *Spark* (formerly *New Age*, *Guardian* etc.) at the same time, the banning, imprisonment or forcing into exile of leading figures and rank-and-file activists in all these organisations, as well as in SACTU, the SA Indian Congress and the SA Coloured People’s Congress. The climax of this orgy of repression was the Rivonia trial, the other trials of Umkhonto militants, and finally the Bram Fischer trial of 1966.

The brutal repression forced the liberation movement on to the defensive, and indeed pushed it out of the public arena for a brief period. But such actions do not allay the suffering and hardship of the people; indeed they only stiffen their anger and bitterness. But,

to discover new forms of struggle, create new organisations while building on the experience and achievement of those that have been driven deep underground — these things take time Meanwhile the enemy does not passively wait for the next round to begin. In this case, the enemy moved with great deliberation.

As far back as 1965, irritated by the initial success of the Progressive Party in Cape Provincial elections in attracting Coloured votes, Prime Minister Verwoerd said that he would not allow white parties to 'meddle in the politics' of other races. The thing to note is the extension into the political party sphere of the doctrine of separate development. Pro-apartheid whites are allowed to dominate and tyrannise every aspect of black people's lives at whim; but blacks may not appeal to whites or work with them for common democratic goals (as the banning of Chief Luthuli and the outlawing of the Congress of Democrats demonstrated). And anti-apartheid whites must be cut off from black organisations and activists, lest the non-racial character and the basic unity of the democratic forces in our country be seen by all the oppressed as the basis of their strength in opposition to the racists.

A Select Committee was appointed in 1966, to give effect to the general strategic and particular tactical aims of the Nationalist Party. In the end, three separate pieces of legislation were needed, of which the one most relevant to this article was Act No. 51 of 1968 — the Prohibition of Political Interference Act.

THE TIDE TURNS

This Act killed multi-racialism in the life of any legal political party (but not, of course, in the life of the underground movement), making it an offence for any white person to address any gathering comprised totally or mostly of blacks, in pursuance of the policy of any political party. The Liberal Party disbanded itself, and the Progressive Party, whose policies had never struck at the root of white supremacy, turned itself relatively painlessly into a whites-only party. This was perhaps the lowest depth that the freedom struggle touched inside South Africa in the 1960's, although the tide had already begun to turn with the opening of the joint ANC-ZAPU guerilla campaign in Rhodesia in

August 1967, and the first mass leaflet distribution by the reconstructed underground movement of the ANC in the previous month.

But neither the opening of the guerilla campaign, nor the activities of the underground, offered scope at that stage for open mass struggle, for the wider involvement of students and workers in forms of resistance.

In that situation, the inadequacy of existing legal organisations for the needs of the struggle became apparent first — as so often happens — to the students. The formation of the University Christian Movement in 1967 brought together two closely linked strands in the new radicalism: the militancy of black students who found the reformism of NUSAS a brake upon the growth of the student struggle; and the ferment in the church, stimulated by the growing harassment of outspoken church leaders (like Bishop Crowther). To this may be added the close involvement of the churches at mission level with the appalling social consequences of mass removals which began to affect new rural communities at that time, and especially after the Limehill scandal in 1968-69.

It was against this background that a theological commission appointed by the SA Council of Churches, reflecting its growing concern not only about the internal situation, but also at the growing isolation of the country in general and the churches in particular, issued its report: "A Message to the People of South Africa". It said:

"The policy of separate development is based on the domination of one group over all others; it depends on the maintenance of white supremacy; thus it is rooted in and dependent on a policy of sin."

This clear, authoritative message, stating the essential contradiction between apartheid and Christianity, was eagerly received; four printings were quickly snapped up by Christians and non-Christians of all races. It gave rise directly to the question: what is the responsibility of Christians in apartheid society?

The Christian Institute and the SA Council of Churches decided in April 1969 to establish a study project to follow up the 'Message'. Peter Randall, previously assistant director of the SA Institute of Race Relations, was appointed director, and he stayed at the helm throughout the life of the project.

Given a situation in which all liberal and radical thought was coming

under attack from the government, it was inevitable that Sprocas, born in a specifically Christian context, would quickly broaden out beyond religious boundaries. Six study commissions were appointed, of which only the first had a religious orientation:

<i>Commission</i>	<i>Chairman</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
Church	Rt. Rev. Bill Burnett	Rev. J.W. de Gruchy
Economics	Dr. E.A. Barker	Francis Wilson
Education	Mr. Ray Tunmer	Mr. R.K. Muir
Legal	Prof. John Dugard	Jack Unterhalter
Political	Prof. A.S. Mathews	Dr. David Welsh
Social	Prof. J.V.O. Reid	Mr. L. Schlemmer

To this must be added the Black Community Programme which started off under the aegis of Sprocas, but later took on an independent existence (director Bennie Khoapa — who had been Secretary for African work in the SA National Council of YMCA's 1964-71).

The Commissions were large, and met infrequently. But since they did most of the basic thinking and writing of Sprocas, a word about their composition is in order. As the names above indicate, they were heavily dominated by white academics, most of them liberals. Hardly any of the commission members had any background of involvement in the Congress movement in its earlier legal days, and still fewer had any connection with the working class movement, whether in its trade union or political aspects.

The Commissions each produced a book-length report, and other documents — critiques of apartheid, which were largely unoriginal and decked out to a tedious degree in the jargon in which sociologists clothe the commonplace. Theirs was an analysis in which anybody familiar with the propaganda of the liberation movement in the 1960's would have found little new, and in which there was little trace of a scientific class analysis, such as had been made by the SACP, in its 1962 programme, the *Road to South African Freedom*.

Nevertheless it was a thorough, wide-ranging detailed and passionate indictment of apartheid, the only one being made openly inside South Africa at that time. At its best, as in the crisp report of the Education Commission, it was first class. And some of the most interesting contributions came from individuals of unusual talent — Francis Wilson's regrettably rushed (and therefore patchy) but nonetheless valuable

study of migrant labour; and Rick Turner's closely argued essay "The Eye of the Needle", which showed the influence of Marxist ideas, was more genuinely radical than most of the Sprocas publications, even if it did toy in eclectic manner with currently fashionable notions of 'workers' participation' and 'participatory democracy' — without facing the fact that in South Africa the democratic revolution has to be achieved before the door to socialism can really be opened.

Sprocas set out, however, to be more than a study programme. For many of its participants, it became something of a political movement, if not a formal party. Its life coincided with the rise of 'Black Consciousness' — a trend with which Sprocas was closely connected, and with which its most militant activities strongly identified.

In its concluding phase, in particular in the reports and recommendations of the Social and Political Commissions, and in the final book summing up the whole exercise (*A Taste of Power* by Peter Randall), Sprocas attempted to define the main features of an alternative society to that created in the name of apartheid, and to chart the course leading to it from the present situation.

The clear definition of programme is, of course, a vital issue for any progressive movement; and a revolutionary movement fighting a brutal foe, as in South Africa, needing unlimited sacrifices in the course of the struggle, must define absolutely clearly what it is fighting for. Our liberation movement's programme matured in the 1950's and found its full and complete expression in the Freedom Charter. The Communist Party's programme, adopted in 1962, places the programme of the liberation movement in the longer term perspective of the struggle for socialism, while confirming all the main features of the Freedom Charter.

THE SPROCAS PROGRAMME

By comparison, the Sprocas programme is a feeble thing. On the basic question of the franchise, it is vague to the point of obscurity — possibly to avert splits.¹ Instead it waffles about individual freedoms, and participation for all the governed at all levels of government. It talks enthusiastically about 'pluralism', and asserts that "Government power should not be used to enforce a centrally determined policy in inter-personal social relations, cultural and educational affairs". The quotation illus-

trates how anti-authoritarian notions currently in vogue in the West, especially in the student and youth movement, have been aped in South Africa. It fails to take into account that in educational and cultural matters, a revolutionary democratic government in South Africa will need a 'centrally determined policy' in educational and cultural matters (as well as in other spheres) to overcome the backwardness — cultural, spiritual and technical — which it will inherit from apartheid.

Trendy to the last, Sprocas joined the 'Federation' bandwagon which got rolling in the last 12-18 months of Sprocas' life. The political thinking — with all its limitations — behind the concept of federation was spelled out with typical thoughtfulness by one of the more serious journalists Allister Sparks, in a series of articles last year (*Rand Daily Mail* 8 Dec.):

"As the black man's political muscle increases, and with that his anger and determination, we must ask ourselves what will happen eventually. Where are we heading?

I believe it must inevitably be towards a compromise. White South Africa is too powerful ever to be overthrown. The most that can happen is that black South Africa will steadily rise up until it reaches a position of hard bargaining power. Then the negotiating will begin for a new dispensation in South Africa — and it will have to be a dispensation satisfactory to both black and white.

The answer, I believe, will be found in some form of federation. Already there is a considerable area of common ground, as the recent conference in East London revealed. The spectrum of potential consensus stretches from well inside the Nationalist Party right through the white opposition and deep into the black community (Indian, Coloured and all the big five Bantustan leaders have subscribed to it).

This is why I believe the concept of federation is of such immense importance. . . . It is the one thing that offers the hope of compromise rather than confrontation when black power has risen to a point where it can challenge the power of the whites."

A revealing passage. For Mr. Sparks, as for the Sprocas writers, apartheid is invincible. But the tide of black anger is rising — how much more interesting the idea of federation became after the strike wave in early 1973! Shrinking from a decisive confrontation between the liberation

forces and the reactionaries, which could lead to the capture of power by the oppressed peoples of South Africa (a revolution, no less!), Mr. Sparks and Sprocas take refuge in the vague concept of 'federation', with its implication of a sharing or division of power.

Finally, the Sprocas formula for the economic basis of a free South Africa — portentously described as the 'Responsible Society' — comprised the following 'principles':

- Development exists for man, not man for development.
- Social justice must be the goal, not just economic growth.
- Power in industry must be shared, and so must risks.
- There must be equality of opportunity in education and economic activity.

How flabby this is as a programme to curb the power of the great financial, industrial and mining giants, who feed on the cheap labour of workers which apartheid provides for them. The problem of nationalisation of key sectors is avoided (again, it appears, for the sake of a barren unity), and the future of the land is not dealt with. (The experiences of Tanzania — or any other of the under-developed countries in the Third World — as a relevant model for industrialised South Africa is simply ignored.) In this as in other respects, Sprocas lags badly behind the Freedom Charter; it shows the limitations of political programmes hatched up by academics remote from the day-to-day struggles of the oppressed, and without Marxist insights into property relations. That said, Sprocas may be congratulated for reaching the conclusion — vital to the case against further foreign investment — that economic growth will not of itself erode apartheid.

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

If those involved in Sprocas had gone no further than a critique of apartheid society and a blueprint for a democratic alternative, the revolutionary left might have paid but little attention to their ideas. But they strayed into the field of action — theorising about what ought to be done to change South Africa, and came up with nearly a hundred concrete proposals.

These proposals, too numerous — and in some cases too trivial or unrealistic — to discuss here, are mostly offered as practical and feasible

within the existing order. How then should a revolutionary regard them? Many of the proposals are sensible, and any militant seeking to mobilise the people in struggle would make similar proposals. Taken individually, the short-term demands advanced and the immediate struggles initiated by revolutionaries are often much the same as those of reformists. The crucial distinction lies ultimately in the intentions of the actors.

How to tell what the real character of these intentions are? There are at least two guides — in the sphere of programme, discussed above; and perhaps more revealing in the sphere of strategy and tactics. In our present situation in South Africa there are two major questions which inevitably divide the revolutionary militants from the reformist half-hearts, and we shall look at them in turn.

The first is the question of violence. On the basis of long experience of struggle by peaceful means, large sections of the oppressed came to realise in the early 1960s that the use of armed force was essential if a decisive blow was to be struck at the racist enemy. The formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe by the ANC in consultation with the Communist Party both reflected this recognition and served to spread and deepen this understanding of reality. Nor were they alone. Poqo, the African Resistance Movement, the Yui Chiu Chan Club and other clandestine outfits — short-lived because not linked to the masses in wider political struggle — adopted forms of armed struggle.

That was a historic new stage in the freedom struggle — an irreversible departure from the past. The South African revolutionary movement had learnt for itself the lesson which the Bolsheviks learned in the first unsuccessful Revolution of 1905: not that they had been wrong to fight; but that they needed to fight harder, with better all-round technical and political preparation, never failing to combine, as Lenin insisted, both legal and illegal methods of struggle.

The new reformists turn their backs on the early 1960s, dismissing the period as a failure which 'proves' that violence in South Africa cannot succeed. The new reformists — not confined to Sprocas, but their thinking best exemplified by Sprocas — insist that peaceful change is the only way forward; and thus renounce not only the method of armed struggle, but hope of revolutionary change itself. To insist on peaceful change when force is essential to revolutionary change is to accept the basic features of the existing society, while picking only at its many obnoxious secondary features.

'Peaceful change' is the rallying cry not only of the reformists in South Africa, but of the reactionaries in the West in relation to South Africa. The Nixon administration, like the former Heath government, and the West German government, are committed to *peaceful* change in Southern Africa. And that, we know from bitter experience, means the support of the *status quo*, against the revolutionary forces.

PROSPECTS OF PEACE

We may accept (while disagreeing with) the sincerity of those who hold back from violent forms of struggle for reasons of personal conscience. But that is a different thing from discounting armed struggle in general. Similarly, one could not have expected a *legal* movement like Sprocas to enthusiastically endorse armed struggle. But it was unnecessary, and harmful, to denounce it. The fear of revolution so characteristic of reformists, was eloquently stated on behalf of all Sprocas writers by the Natal sociologist Lawrence Schlemmer:

"If Africans face the same intransigence as they face today when their political consciousness has developed, the degree of conflict could be considerable. It seems utterly crucial that the aim of working for conditions which will reduce the heat of inevitable conflict in SA be one of the major goals of strategic action for change." (*Towards Social Change* p.161)

Peter Randall, in '*A Taste of Power*' goes out of his way to endorse this passage and the immediately-following paragraph which begins:

"The greatest hope for peaceful change in SA lies in the possibility of there being opportunities, in the not too distant future, for blacks to exert constructive pressure on whites and within white-controlled institutions."

If the ruling whites can, by constructive pressure short of violence be compelled to yield to Africans' demands, then it would be wrong to resort to violence. But this is precisely the debate which took place some 12-14 years ago and which history decisively resolved in favour of the revolutionary forces. Does it need more Carletonvilles to rub that lesson in? Can we ignore the way in which, since then, the armed struggle of the liberation movements has transformed the situation

throughout Southern Africa, throwing the racist and colonialist regimes on to the defensive in Mozambique, Angola, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Namibia?

The odd thing about the Sprocas people is that in part of their minds, they recognise the die-hard racism of the majority of whites. Randall for example writes:

“For decades liberal whites have sought to exhort and convert the white masses. That this is largely a futile and even counter-productive exercise hardly needs stating.”

But the old timidity — which he himself criticises — reasserts itself and he writes in the same book:

“We see our task as primarily within the white community, to prepare it for fundamental change, and to bring about such meaningful change as possible.”

And the Sprocas Political Commission argues that major change in the political system:

“. . . will require sacrifice, courage and the casting out of fear, since white South Africans can achieve security only by admitting their black fellow-citizens to an effective share of political participation . . .”

In effect, this is the old siren call of liberalism in South Africa, going back to the Cape franchise, to the Joint Councils of Africans and Europeans that ran from the 1920s into the 1940s, the Progressive and Liberal Parties. Its message is “Patience! Hamba kahle! Put your trust in the white man.” In its most extreme, anti-communist form, this was expressed by Patrick Duncan in 1960 when he brazenly said that South Africa would be better off under the Nationalist Party than under communism. In other words, “the present society is preferable to revolution” — the hallmark of reformism everywhere.

THE ROLE OF INVESTMENT

Closely linked with the question of struggle in South Africa is the issue of foreign investment's role. The campaign for the withdrawal of foreign capital is crucial to the international strategy of isolating the apartheid regime. Not only is opposition to foreign capital's presence in South Africa an integral part of the boycott and sanctions strategy; but it is

revolutionary, in that it strikes at the economic basis of apartheid — super-exploitation of cheap black labour which provides the profits.

Foreign capital has played a decisive role in shaping the oppression and exploitation of our present society. Today, whether as a market for manufactured goods, as a supplier of many minerals (gold, coal, platinum, uranium, chrome, nickel etc.) and agricultural products (wool, fruit, sugar etc.), as a field for profitable new investment, or as a base for the penetration of other countries on the African continent, South Africa is a valuable and strategically crucial arena of operations for international capital. And all on the basis of cheap labour.

This is why the liberation movement finds it increasingly necessary to expose and attack the role of foreign capital in supporting the apartheid system. Conditions cannot be laid down which — if met — would justify the role of foreign investment. Even if such conditions could be enforced — and who is to guarantee that? — even if a foreign firm encouraged trade unions, paid living wages, donated some of its profits to educational or cultural projects or tried to house its black labour force, the very fact that it operated profitably would give it a vested interest in maintaining 'law and order', that is to say, in perpetuating apartheid.

Sprocas, like the SA Council of Churches, TUCSA, the Bantustan 'leaders', the Institute of Race Relations, and all reformist elements, has come out for the 'constructive engagement' of foreign capital in SA. Like it or not, by taking up this stand they undermine the growing isolation of SA abroad, and ward off the mounting pressure on foreign beneficiaries from our people's daily hardships.

In fact, Sprocas lent itself to a Public Relations exercise designed to build a progressive image for one of the most exploitative undertakings in the whole country — and one exactly fitting the design of 'separate development' — Rio-Tinto-Zinc's subsidiary, Palabora Mining Company. This is an immensely profitable border industry concern located on the edge of both Lebowa and Gazankulu.

Sprocas also, on behalf of the United Presbyterian Church of the United States, looked at the operations of Standard Telephones and Cables Pty., South African subsidiary of the notorious US-based ITT, whose attempts to undermine the progressive Allende government in Chile, and whose other anti-democratic intrigues in Latin America leave no doubt about its retrogressive political role. Sprocas found practically nothing good to say about Standard Telephones and Cables; and yet it

failed to draw the obvious conclusion — that foreign firms, like South African firms, are part and parcel of the apartheid system and help to keep it going.

There are few black workers so foolish as to believe that these giant companies are really their allies in the struggle for social and political change. But where reformist notions creep in, the nonsense of 'constructive engagement' seems to follow. It is to the credit of the Black People's Convention and the Labour Party — whatever differences they may have with each other — that both understand and condemn the role of foreign capital in SA.

BLACK COMMUNITY PROGRAMME (BCP)

The ultimate futility and hopelessness of the Sprocas exercise emerges most clearly in the Black Community Programme (BCP). Its documents are full of windy clichés signifying nothing. Its readiness to make race the definitive characteristic of political tendencies, summed up in the glib, but dangerously misleading slogan "Our struggle is not political, but racial", illustrates the limitations of a black exclusivist approach to the freedom struggle. It is an approach which is ultimately reformist in essence (however militant in posture) because it accepts as fundamental the definitions and the racial concepts imposed by the ruling-class. On this basis arose the ideological affinity in the late 1950s and early 1960s between the PAC and the Liberal Party — despite more obvious 'differences' — and in the more recent past between politically immature elements in the 'Black Consciousness' trend and the Sprocas-type radicals.

Typical of everything about the BCP is this passage from the essay by its main figure Bennie Khoapa, in *'Black Viewpoint'* (a passage, incidentally, used by Peter Randall as a sort of frontispiece quotation for *'A Taste of Power'*):

"For the New Black, this is a preparatory stage. The means are not now available for entering the final road. Our task is therefore to prepare for ten, fifteen and forty years. The only question now is whether black people are made of such stuff as histories are made of, and black people must answer that question in the presence of the world . . ."

Stripped of its rhetoric, this is saying: "forget about revolution now.

It is in the distant future. Meanwhile, live with dignity as far as you can" . . . Sad, really; under the brave phrase-making lies despair and defeatism. Communists, freedom fighters, underground activists, revolutionaries believe that we are already walking along the final road; that revolution is an inevitable historical process of which we are part — not an uncertain future event; above all, that the means of our liberation do lie to hand *now*, in mass struggle. To realise our liberation we need to beat back the various brands of reformism which constitutes a constant danger to the growth and confidence of our movement.

REFERENCE

- 1 The excuse proffered for not making one-man-one-vote a central political demand is thoroughly specious:

"Effective political organisation and the articulation of group interests must be present before the franchise can be used to full effect. Effective power can precede the vote, if it is backed, say, by effective organisation of labour, or by other forms of group organisation.

This is *not* to deny the probable effectiveness of a universal franchise if it were possible to achieve this in the foreseeable future. (But) . . . popular white attitudes to the vote for blacks are so completely intransigent that a universal franchise is not likely to be achieved *without blacks gaining effective influence beforehand*. . . . But until the latter is achieved, calls for a universal franchise are likely to remain futile." (Italics in original)

(*Towards Social Change* — Sprocas Publication No.6 p. 47-8)

The South African Elections

STATEMENT BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY

The all-white electorate in South Africa has once again gone to the polls to elect its all-white Parliament. Vorster's regime has received a renewed 'mandate' with an increased majority to rule over a country in which 80% of our people have neither the right to vote or to stand for government office.

The 26 years since the Nationalist government took power have seen an unprecedented attack on the rights of the black people and their political leaders by techniques ranging from administrative and political dictatorship to open terror. Those who should be sitting in our country's Parliament are incarcerated in Robben Island and other notorious prisons.

The gap between white wealth and black poverty is greater now than it was in 1948 when the present regime took office. Lying statistics are

poured out externally, comparing the income of South Africa's black people with those of the independent states of Africa still suffering from the ravages of centuries of imperialist exploitation. Yet there is no country in the world, whether in Africa or elsewhere, in which the majority of the people have such a small share of the wealth which they create, as in South Africa. It is in an attempt to perpetuate this state of affairs that the overwhelming majority of the white electorate showed in this election its renewed commitment to a policy of race domination.

It would be illusory to exaggerate the significance of the gains made by the Progressive Party. In the first place the Progressive Party is neither committed to a policy of immediate majority rule, nor does it recognise the right of the black majority to use its organised strength to wrest power from the white racialists. Secondly, the minor Progressive Party advances must be seen in the context of an overall hardening of support by the overwhelming majority of the white voters for a regime committed to race exploitation and a white monopoly of all levels of social and political power.

On the whole this latest election reinforces the conviction of our voiceless people that no answer can be found within the white monopolised constitutional framework. In place of meaningful political power the black majority are offered so-called 'homelands' in 13% of the country's land in which is to be found hardly 1% of its industrial and financial riches created by the black people's labour. More and more this Bantustan fraud is advanced by white politicians and those appointed by them to run these impoverished tribal reservations in order to divert the black majority from their undoubted stake in the whole of our country.

It is clear that the will of the true majority in South Africa can only be expressed through mass organisation and mass resistance, including armed struggle, and not through choices made by those whose privileges and comforts are based on race domination. And when the people's liberation struggle inevitably triumphs there will be an end to the 'democratic' charade which is played out every 5 years amongst the whites to choose a regime best suited to safeguard their interests.

David Ivon Jones

1883~1924

A MEMOIR

by A. Lerumo

By any reckoning, one of the most outstanding pioneer marxists produced by Africa was David Ivon Jones, who died fifty years ago, on 31 May, 1924. He was the first secretary of the International Socialist League — precursor of the Communist Party of South Africa — and editor of its journal, *The International*. Subsequently he was the Party's representative at the Communist International and served during Lenin's time on the Executive Committee on that organisation.

Not a great deal of information is known about him personally; no biography has appeared. He was personally extremely modest, completely absorbed in the workers' cause. Yet he left an enduring mark in history.

Jones came from Wales. He was born in Aberystwyth (Cardiganshire) in 1883 of a well-known local family. His grandfather, John Jones, ('known throughout Wales as *Ivon*') was commemorated only last year in *The Cambrian News* (May 1973), as a "distinguished man of letters". The paper recalls that he was frequently visited by "poets, musicians



and literary men" passing through Aberystwyth, and a founder of the local Literary, Scientific and Mechanics Institute. Perhaps this may help to explain his grandson's gift for expressive, sometimes poetic writing.

According to the same journal (September 1915) in a comment on his activities as Secretary of the S.A. Labour Party, "while at Aberystwyth D. Ivon Jones was active with the local Shop Assistants' Union". But much of his energies went to the Unitarian congregation at that time. He was elected secretary of its New Street Meeting House in 1906, until he left for New Zealand the following year. Mr. Islwyn Nicholas, to whom I am indebted for much of the foregoing information, comments that at the time "he appears to have been a Christian Humanist, more of a humanist than anything else".

Ivon Jones went to New Zealand on his doctor's orders, in the hope that the climate would improve his health, for he had already contracted the tuberculosis which was to plague him for the rest of his life and condemn him to an early death. Little is known about his five years in New Zealand. Tom Bell, the outstanding British Communist who worked with him in the Comintern and wrote an obituary in the *London Communist Review* (July 1924) says that Jones was an agricultural labourer

in Otago. "He learnt to milk cows, to plough land, to shear sheep" and other "proletarian jobs".

After five years he left for South Africa and settled in the Transvaal, and it was in our country that he became absorbed in the working class movement, his single-minded passion for the rest of his life. He joined the Labour Party and became (in 1912 or 1913) secretary of the Germiston Branch. Then he moved to Vereeniging, where he was employed by the Victoria Falls Power Company: an offshoot of the big mining houses.

EARLY DAYS

In 1913 the trade unions of the Witwatersrand called a general strike against the repressive, anti-labour policies of the Smuts-Botha government. Jones was the only clerical worker in the VFP to respond to the call. For this he was promptly and not unexpectedly sacked. It was a crucial turning point.

He was immediately taken on by the Mine Workers' Association as assistant to the general secretary.

Bill Andrews used to say that this experience of working in close contact with the bureaucracy of a big trade union 'opened Jones's eyes' to many negative aspects of the labour movement. But so far from disheartening him it made him more militant and revolutionary.

1913 was a stormy year in South Africa. Apart from the strikes of white workers, there was a mass campaign against the abominable 'Native Land Act', headed by the young African National Congress; there was the resistance movement of the Indian community in Natal and the Transvaal; there was a mass strike of African miners. These heroic struggles of the oppressed black majority did not fail to strike a responsive chord at the annual conference of the Labour Party at the end of the year, shown among other things by its election of a number of militants to the executive, including as chairman that incorruptible class fighter Andrews, and as secretary, David Ivon Jones.

Within months that leadership was faced with a most severe test of its integrity: the onset of the first world war — which nakedly exposed the opportunism of most of the leaders of the Social-Democratic and Labour Parties of Europe, and ultimately split the S.A. Labour Party, too, from top to bottom.

It is a matter of historical record that the S.A.L.P. leadership acquitted itself with great credit in this acid test, becoming one of the very few Parties of the Second International to stick to its solemn pledges undertaken at international conferences before the war. Like Lenin's Bolshevik Party (though lacking its Marxist profundity and theoretical clarity) the Administrative Council of the S.A.L.P. protested against the capitalist governments of Europe for fomenting a war for the benefit of 'the enemies of the working class'. It called upon the workers of the world to oppose 'this unjust war'.

Considering its composition and theoretical outlook (or, rather, lack of one) it is exceedingly strange that the S.A. Labour Party should have come to occupy so advanced and honourable a position in the international labour movement. It had been formed only 5 years before, in 1909, on the initiative of the trade unions, particularly those in the Transvaal, to secure adequate representation of labour in the first (1910) Union Parliament. We must remember that those unions were composed mainly of white workers, mostly immigrants and mostly from Britain. Also, the franchise for parliament was confined exclusively (with minor exceptions in the Cape Province) to white men.

No doubt the exceptionally acute class struggles in the Transvaal against international monopoly capital and the consequent leftward swing in the Party help to explain the composition of the leadership elected at the national conference at the end of 1913. But, without over-emphasising the role of individuals in history, we can be forgiven for stressing the truly principled and incorruptible nature of the men who came to head the Party at that time, men who followed the logic of their class position to the very end, notably Bill Andrews, S.P. Bunting, Colin Wade and David Ivon Jones.

Not only did they take a firm position against the war but found that position endorsed and themselves returned to office at the next conference at the end of 1914. But, perhaps inevitably, the tide began to turn against them. We should not forget either that at that period anti-war sentiment was to be found mainly amongst the confirmed anti-British Boer republicans, some of whom headed by General de Wet had staged an abortive rebellion in the early months of the war. But, at that time, few Afrikaners had entered the working class. Together

with the nascent class consciousness amongst Labour Party members, there survived strong elements of British jingoism which were effectively played upon by the Right-wing white chauvinist elements in the Party headed by Colonel Creswell. They intrigued and eventually succeeded in August 1915 in staging a 'putsch' to overthrow the leadership and reverse its policy on the war.

The main officers of the Party, Andrews and Jones, were not blind to these intrigues. But motivated by considerations of Party unity they did not, it might be thought, act with sufficient vigour to suppress them. They permitted, though with stern disapproval, the editor of the Party organ *The Worker*, W. Wybergh, to carry on pro-war propaganda in its columns. They did not officially associate themselves with the War on War League, headed by such militants as S.P. Bunting and Colin Wade, though no doubt they sympathised with its internationalist policy.

By July 1915 rightist intrigues had grown to such an extent that they could not be ignored. Jones and Andrews, together with eighteen other leading Party members, came out publicly against the Creswellites in a pamphlet *The Labour Party's Duty in the War* vigorously defending the Party policy. By then it was too late. The Creswellites forced through a special conference on the war and, shamelessly playing on the most backward sentiments of chauvinism, carried through a resolution reversing the anti-war policy of the Jones-Andrews leadership. The internationalists complained that the conference had been "packed". No doubt there was justice in their allegations. But looked at with the wisdom of hindsight it is hard to believe that the Creswell faction could have out-manoeuvred the established Party leadership if they did not enjoy at least substantial support from the membership of the Labour Party as then constituted.

Jones himself provided a clue to the realities behind these events when he wrote later that year (December 1915):

Slaves to a higher oligarchy, the white workers of South Africa themselves batten on a lower slave class, the native races. Thus has the South African labour movement grown more intolerant to the native slaves than any other working class in the world, and consequently more parasitical than any other. To such a movement, talk of the international unity of the working class could never arouse sincere response.

Within a few weeks the split in the Labour Party was complete. The internationalists, forced to resign their positions, found themselves compelled to continue their work completely separated from and outside of the Labour Party. Joined by the War on War League and the Marxian Socialist Labour Party they established the International Socialist League. Jones was elected Secretary of the ISL and editor of its militant journal *The International*.

A NEW CHAPTER

It was the beginning of a new chapter in the life of David Ivon Jones, a beginning from which he never looked back until the end of his days.

He began his first editorial with these words: "Here we plant the flag of the New International in South Africa." These extraordinary words written long before the formation of the Communist International, were a flash of the profound insight which Jones was increasingly to show from then onwards.

Rejecting the crass opportunism of Labour Party and Social-Democratic policies on the war issue, he transferred his criticism of the SALP on the central issue, then as now, of South African politics — the national emancipation of the African people. "Internationalism" which did not concede African rights, he wrote (October 1915), was a sham. "Not until we free the Natives, can we hope to free the whites". Under his editorship the Party journal opened up to S.P. Bunting and others ever more radical consideration of what was still thought of as 'the native question'.

At the same time, particularly under the influence of the Marxist literature and ideas of the SLP, Jones became more and more immersed in the theory of scientific socialism. "What the labour movement requires is the return to the limpid, unequivocal affirmations of the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx" he wrote ("Back to the Manifesto" — editorial in *The International*, 10 December 1915).

The impact of the events in Russia in 1917 upon the ISL and in particular on David Ivon Jones have been more fully dealt with elsewhere. (see "Fifty Fighting Years", Inkululeko Publications, London 1971).

With remarkable intuition Jones saw the bourgeois democratic revolution of February in that year as only the precursor of a still more deep-going proletarian revolution to come. When in November his prophecy was vindicated by the Bolshevik revolution, the conquest of power by the working class, Jones's exultation knew no bounds. The "Dawn of the World" was what he called the Great October Socialist Revolution . . . "The most glorious and most peaceful revolution of all time". (Editorial in *The International*, November 1917).

In 1918 Jones's health compelled him to move once again, this time to Pietermaritzburg in Natal. But the move quenched neither his enthusiasm nor his energies. Together with a local comrade, Laurie Green, he wrote, had translated into Zulu, and distributed a pamphlet "The Bolsheviks are Coming". It was addressed "To the Workers of South Africa — Black and White . . ." "While the Black worker is oppressed the white worker cannot be free . . . this is Bolshevism: the Solidarity of Labour". For issuing this leaflet the two comrades were prosecuted for inciting to public violence.

Of these hectic years in South Africa S.P. Bunting later wrote: "Ivon was the heart and soul of our activities and propaganda, amazing us all by his vitality, courage and power when all the while his frail body was fighting a rearguard action with death". ("Ten Crowded Years of Glorious Life" — On the death of David Ivon Jones — *The International*, 6 July 1914).

JONES IN MOSCOW

In May 1920 ill health, once more, sent Ivon Jones abroad, this time to Europe. He attended the Third Congress of the Communist International in Moscow in 1921, as the representative of the Communist Party of South Africa. He was fated never to return to the beloved country of his adoption which occupied the centre of his thoughts until his dying day. But his few remaining years spent in the Soviet state were filled with tireless and invaluable activity in the cause of the South African and the international working-class movement.

Not much has been published about Jones's last years in Soviet Russia: what there is is mainly due to the devoted researches of A.B.

Davidson and published in his noteworthy book: *South Africa: the Birth of a Protest 1870-1924** (Moscow 1972).

Jones was elected to the Executive Committee of the Communist International in August 1921, and for the next two years until he was again struck down by a severe attack of tuberculosis, he took an extremely active part in the daily work of the Comintern. In the minutes of the Comintern, writes Davidson, "his name is always listed with those of Clara Zetkin, Bela Kuhn, Bill Haywood, Vasil Kolarov, Wilhelm Pieck, A. Kollontai, A. Lunacharski, S. Losovski and many other leading figures of the international Communist movement at that time".

His primary and official duty was to maintain contact between the Communist International and its South African affiliate, and this task he performed conscientiously to the very end. In addition to official correspondence, he maintained constant personal correspondence with the Party leaders at home; he received not only *The International* and other CPSA publications but also government documents and the *Rand Daily Mail*, and was able to keep the international movement well informed about South African developments.

In addition to this he interested himself keenly in developments in all parts of Africa and other colonial territories, so that the Moscow newspaper *Rabochye Gazetta* once referred to him affectionately as the ECCI representative "from Africa".

He wrote numerous articles on South African and all-African questions for international journals such as *International Press Correspondence* and other periodicals.

At the same time he made himself one of the main fountainheads of information about the events in the young Soviet Republic and their significance, not only for South Africa (where his regular column "Russia Day by Day" appeared in *The International*) but throughout the English-speaking world.

He mastered the essentials of Russian within a few weeks according to Davidson, and, at a time when Lenin's writings were a closed book to English-speaking countries, he popularised their essential contents for the first time. *The Communist Review*, London, featured such articles by Jones as "Lenin's First Book" (May 1924), "Lenin's First News-

*Unfortunately this book is available only in the original Russian. I am obliged to Boris Rubalsky, now living in Prague, who translated the lengthy passages relating to Jones for me.

paper" (July 1924) and a number of other articles on Soviet developments.

In the Comintern, Jones took up not only African and colonial questions in general, but also specifically the question of the African-descended Black people in the United States.

At the Third Congress of the Comintern, Pravda reported (14 July 1921) that Jones drew a parallel between the position of blacks in South Africa and the USA' "The speaker called upon the Executive Committee to deal seriously with the Negro question".

In 1922 he published an article in the *Communist Review* "American Imperialism and the Negroes". He denounced US policy not only towards blacks at home but also in such areas as Haiti and Liberia.

He also discussed black resistance movements in the United States. He accused Garvey of being a "charlatan", but wrote with great respect of W.E.B. Du Bois and quoted from his articles in *The Crisis* – then the organ of the NAACP.

It is noteworthy, writes Davidson, that by no means all the journalists in the international communist movement of the twenties and thirties correctly assessed Du Bois and his followers, who were usually branded as reactionaries and reformists. By contrast Jones paid tribute to Du Bois, and hailed the Pan-African Congresses he convened – while noting the preponderance of intellectuals at them and calling for greater efforts to enlist the African working class.

One of his last activities in the Comintern was the drawing up of a memorandum (July 1923) calling for the setting up of a "Colonial Bureau" to study and analyse the situation in colonised countries.

Shortly before his death (31 May 1924) at a tuberculosis sanitarium in Yalta, Jones dictated in Russian a "political testament" which he signed and had witnessed. He adjured "my South African Party Comrades".

1. To maintain solidarity with the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

2. To carry out the great revolutionary mission imposed on colonies in general and South Africa in particular with revolutionary devotion and dignity, concentrating their efforts on shaking the foundations of world capitalism and British imperialism.

"I beg pardon of Russia and the RCP (B) whose guest I was and whom I loved and with whom I became one, for my inability due to

ill-health, to give the energy, intelligence and strength which the cause deserved”.

Jones's remains were taken to Moscow where they were interred in the Novodevichye Cemetery at a state funeral attended by leading representatives of the international Communist movement.

So he ended his days, like those great South Africans who came after him, Albert Nzula and J.B. Marks, in the first socialist workers' republic.

The more one learns about this great pioneer of our movement the more one is moved to admire his genius and stature. It is much to be regretted that we South African Communists, absorbed as we are in an unrelenting and merciless struggle, have not found enough time or cadres to study and popularise the lives of Ivon Jones and other heroes of our struggle. Let us hope a new generation of Marxist historians will make good our shortcomings.

Thoughts on race consciousness

by MNCANE MKHIZE

It is not we who invented the so-called problem of skin-colour. As is well-known, the colonialists in their orgy of plunder and barbarism, sought justification for their greed and the imposition of their alien rule, in the myth of the superiority of the 'white races' and the 'inherent inferiority' of the dark-skinned 'lesser breeds'.

Oppressors and exploiters always seek to find some sort of ethical 'principle' to sanction their wicked deeds. The capitalists of Europe, while they looted entire continents and enslaved and exterminated whole peoples, needed to find some sort of pretext however mad; some justification other than their own insatiable greed. They seized upon the visible fact that most of us who live in these continents happen to be darker than Europeans. They exaggerated this difference by calling themselves 'white', which they are not; the rest of us they dismissed as 'non-white' — as if this meant 'non-human'. They concocted, without a shred of plausible evidence, a theory that the various 'races' of mankind differ inherently in 'intelligence' and other virtues. The 'superior'.

that is 'white' races were proclaimed to have been destined by God to rule the 'lesser breeds'. This provided divine approval for the seizure of their territories and their wealth, and enslavement of their people.

Of course there have been numerous variations on this general theme, designed to suit the interests of different groups of oppressors at different historical periods. For centuries the English contrived to include their Irish neighbours in the category of inferior races unfit to govern themselves. During the appalling decade of Hitlerism the rulers of Germany proclaimed all 'non-Aryans' to be sub-humans. And present-day Zionism shows an utter disregard of the rights of the Arab peoples.

In general, however, whatever diverse forms of racist lunacy they may have propagated, all varieties of white chauvinists from German Nazis and American Ku-Klux-Klansmen to sophisticated apologists for British, French or Belgian imperialism, are agreed in their rabid hatred and contempt for the original, dark-skinned inhabitants of Africa, Asia, America — north and south — and Australia.

Racist propaganda is not confined to the members of the self-proclaimed master race. It was and is vigorously spread also among its victims, many of whom unconsciously absorbed or passively accepted its arrogant assumptions. Such acceptance — which served to prolong our enslavement and humiliation — is now virtually a thing of the past. In those countries where racism still prevails in an overt form it is facing a growing challenge from the rise of the phenomenon which takes different forms in various regions, but may be generally described as 'black consciousness' or 'black awareness'

Broadly speaking, this is a profoundly healthy and positive development. It is a revolt against unparalleled arrogance, on one side, and against mental domination and servility on the other. It is a proud assertion of the innate dignity, identity and rights of people; of a determination to abolish oppression and servility. It is an expression of the nationalism of oppressed people, whose progressive content directed against oppression, Lenin has said, "we unconditionally support."*

It is true that in the same passage Lenin warned that we must distinguish this progressive content "from the tendency towards national exclusiveness"*. While we must be on guard against any such tendency — a theme we shall return to — let us be aware that the most dangerous

* Collected Works, Vol. 20 p. 412

and vicious ideological weapons of imperialism are and remain anti-Communism and racialism, and especially white chauvinism. As a direct and formidable challenge to these weapons, 'black consciousness' is a part of the forward movement of progressive mankind, whatever reservations one may hold about some of its exponents.

Racialism, as an ideological weapon of imperialism, suffered its most severe setback in the defeat of its foremost champions in the Second World War, in which the most important part was played by the socialist Soviet Union; and in the subsequent continental advances of national liberation, especially in Asia and Africa. The exposures of the Nazis' crimes; the smashing of the former colonial system of imperialism; the rise of the revolutionary, internationalist ideology of Marxism-Leninism as the scientific world outlook of a large part of mankind, are factors which dealt heavy blows to racialism.

The United Nations Charter officially repudiated all forms of race and colour discrimination. Hardly any reputable leader of a major country still dares to preach this loathsome doctrine openly. But it would be very naive to assume that the *reality* of white chauvinism has disappeared on a world scale. In the United States the crudest forms of discrimination are still practiced against the African-descended fifth of the population and other minorities; the same is true to varying degrees of Britain, France and other major imperialist countries, who continue policies of neo-colonialism in their former African and Asian dependencies, and continue to give political, economic and moral assistance to the rabid anti-African racialists of Lisbon, Salisbury and Pretoria.

IN SOUTH AFRICA

Indeed the present-day Republic of South Africa — the most poisonous hotbed of racialism in the modern world — has become for this reason a crucial battlefield in the clash between the forces of imperialist reaction on the one side and those of progress, national liberation and socialism on the other. In order to grasp the importance of the rise of the challenging concept of 'black consciousness' in South Africa in recent years, one must consider the effect of the spread and growth of white chauvinism over more than three centuries. Without attempting anything like a complete survey, let us consider some characteristic statements by white South African politicians.

According to T.V. Bulpin, in his book *Natal and Zululand*, the Volksraad (Parliament) of the Boer Republic of Natal decided as early as 1841, that:

"all the (Zulu) tribespeople should be forcibly collected, removed and settled in one vast location between the Mzimbuvu and Mthamvuna rivers. . . . The classic policy of complete segregation could then be followed with a convenient deviation which allowed each (white) farm to retain five families of African squatters as a labour force."

Cecil John Rhodes, then Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, put the thinking behind this ruthless policy into words when he presented a formal policy statement, in 1887, to his Parliament. He said:

"I will lay down my policy on this native question. . . . Either you have to receive them on an equal footing or to call them a subject race. . . . I have made up my mind that there must be class legislation. . . . We are to be lords over them."

"These are my politics and these are the politics of South Africa. The Native is to be treated as a child and denied the franchise. . . . We must adopt the system of despotism such as works so well in India in our relations with the barbarians of South Africa."

Such crudely racist sentiments from the allegedly 'liberal' Cape Assembly were expressed even more forcefully in the former Boer Republics in the north, which set out in their constitutions the maxim *no equality in Church or State*. When the white representatives of the four former British colonies met in the National Convention of 1909, it is hardly surprising that they drew up a constitution for the Union of South Africa — retained with only minor changes in the present-day republic — which confined membership of Parliament to people of *pure European origin*, and restricted the franchise for this and regional governing bodies in the same way. (With insignificant exceptions, since abolished, in the Cape.)

The common policy of Rhodes, Kruger, Botha and all the other elected leaders has remained essentially unchanged until the present day.

The Second World War, with all the material and human sacrifices it exacted to overthrow Nazism and its policies of race superiority, had barely ended when Field Marshal J.C. Smuts, fresh from his humanitarian speeches at the United Nations, told his all-white Parliament:

"There are certain things about which all (white) South Africans are agreed, all parties and all sections except those who are mad. The

first is that it is a fixed policy to maintain white supremacy in South Africa."

The white electorate however were not satisfied with such sentiments. They turned out the Smuts party, and elected the even more rabidly anti-Black Nationalist Party to office in the 1948 election, to make South Africa even more oppressive of the black man than it had been under Smuts.

The creed of the Nationalist Party was lucidly expressed by the principal architect of apartheid, the late Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd, addressing Parliament in his capacity of Prime Minister in 1963:

"Reduced to its simplest form the problem is nothing but this: We want to keep South Africa white. Keeping it white can mean only one thing, namely white domination. Not 'leadership'; not 'guidance'; but control; supremacy."

Let us remember that it is not just a few fanatics who have been quoted, or words spoken at some tub-thumping rural election meeting. No. These have all been the words of the foremost representatives of the enfranchised white minority, addressing their highest, solemnly-invested tribunal with all the trappings (if none of the reality) of a bourgeois 'Westminster-style' Parliament.

The Nationalist Party has continued to win every election since 1948. Its main opponent the United Party remains in favour of 'white supremacy'. Between them, these two Parties hold all but six of the seats in the all-white Parliament.

WHITE RACIALISM AND BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS

Such is the background of the new upsurge of 'black consciousness', reflected not only in the courageous actions and statements of our militant workers and students, but even in the words of various collaborationist Chiefs and respectable personalities who cannot but respond to the overwhelming pressure of the masses. It reflects the conviction that the African and other oppressed people of our country can only win their inalienable claim for land and freedom by their own efforts; that no illusions should exist that our struggle will be won for us by groups or individuals from among the ranks of the oppressors, the dominant minority.

Some might consider this an extreme conclusion. What about the white Labour movement it might be asked? The Church? The Liberals? The English-speaking students?

A reading of South African history, both past and present, will help dispel excessive hopes of any of these elements. The white labour movement became a mass force following the opening of the diamond and the gold mines a century ago. Some of its leaders, it is true, displayed some concern with the black fellow-workers then also flocking into the mines and industry; the best of them, influenced by Marxism, and inspired by the Russian Revolution, went on to form the Communist Party, which subsequently grew into a dynamic and important component of the liberation movement.

But by and large the white trade union movement has played a sorry and disreputable role in South Africa. Drenched in race and colour-prejudice, selfishly monopolising all skilled and well-paid employment, it has made itself an adjunct of monopoly capitalism and the capitalist farmers in upholding white domination.

After more than a century in which they have turned their backs on the sufferings of their black fellow-workers, have not raised a finger to help them organise and have deliberately thwarted their aspirations to acquire and use industrial skills, today we suddenly find the leaders of the white unions affiliated to TUCSA deciding to organise 'parallel' African unions in *their* industries, for which purpose they solicit financial aid from the British TUC and the US CIO-AFL!

No change of heart, no conversion or good motives lie behind this manoeuvre. These 'trade unionists', like their employers, have been struck with terror at the great strikes of African workers in 1973; and at the dramatic advance of 'black consciousness' and political consciousness among them. They hope to form 'tame' African unions, under their paternalistic guidance in order to prevent the emergence of independent African unions, and a resurgence of the militant South African Congress of Trade Unions. They want company unions after the pattern of the Clothing Workers Union 'led' by Miss Lucy Mvubelo who, at the ILO conference against apartheid, sank so low as to attempt to dissuade the workers of the world from showing solidarity with black South Africa by boycotts and other action.

What about the Churches? We will not speak here about the Dutch Reformed Churches which try to justify white supremacy and black

slavery on 'biblical' grounds. But even the Anglican, Methodist, Catholic and other denominations, have long adopted open or concealed colour-bars, paternalistic attitudes and the inculcation of submissiveness which made them suspect in the eyes of Africans. Since 1884 when the Rev. Nehemiah Tile resigned from the Methodist Church to form the Independent Tembu National Church (Episcopelian) there have been numerous breakaways of entire African congregations to found their own black churches.

Certainly we have been fortunate to find individual churchmen of the calibre of Father Huddleston and Bishop Reeves who, like their successors in Spro-Cas and the Christian Institute, now under attack after the Schlebusch Commission, courageously challenged race-discrimination. But it would be a gross exaggeration to claim that these represented more than a tiny minority of nominal white Christians.

LIBERALISM

Liberalism has a chequered career in South Africa. Prior to Union, when some blacks enjoyed a qualified franchise for the Cape Parliament, a number of white self-proclaimed Liberals and 'friends of the Natives' offered themselves for election in predominantly black constituencies. The white liberal earned himself distrust because his humanism was often patronising, selfish and deceitful. The white liberals called upon the Africans to show they were deserving of advancement by conducting themselves with a restraint and self-discipline which the whites themselves only too obviously failed to exhibit. The final betrayal of the Cape liberals, when they joined with their fellow-whites at the National Convention in approving the outrageously discriminatory constitution of the Union, spelt their disappearance as a political force in the country.

When a new Liberal Party made its appearance in the 50s it was as a direct rival and competitor to the Congress of Democrats, which had been formed shortly before and had proclaimed unqualified adherence to the policy of the African National Congress. The Liberal Party at first rejected, then subsequently accepted the policy of universal franchise, but declined to participate in the Congress of the People or endorse the Freedom Charter. It publicly opposed the Congress movement

when in the 60s it declared in favour of all forms of struggle, including armed struggle. True, the Liberal Party produced a number of courageous people who showed they were prepared to back their beliefs with deeds and sacrifices, but one must say frankly that it failed to make an enduring mark on history.

We intend no disrespect to the many encouraging manifestations of opposition to government policies by white students at English-speaking universities in recent years. That their organisation, NUSAS, has come under heavy fire from the Vorster government which can tolerate no sort of radical criticism at all, speaks for their effectiveness. The actions of these students are welcomed by those who understand the need to enrol every possible ally in the coming struggle for power in South Africa. Indeed for many white students the demonstrations may mark the beginning of the hard but honorable road to complete identification with the true revolutionary movement of our country, which can only be undertaken by the masses of black people themselves headed by their own chosen leaders. Until they have fully entered that road, we should not overestimate either the revolutionary role or the long-term significance of the white student protests.

ROOTS IN HISTORY

Though its present day language, conditions of existence, and circumstances are new, the drive towards unity of the oppressed — the core of 'black consciousness' — has deep roots in the history of our country. It was present in the long drawn-out armed resistance of the various African peoples to British and Boer conquest. Even the idea of uniting the forces of the black people against white aggression was foreshadowed by the genius of Moshoeshe, who made the first attempts to forge such an alliance.

A great landmark was the establishment in 1912 of the African National Congress, which was to be, in the words of one of its founders, Pixley ka Isaka Seme,

"the voice in the wilderness bidding all the dark races of our sub-continent to come together." (Imvo Zabantsundu 24 October 1911.)

The premier task of the ANC was to weld all the different African tribes and language-groups into a single nation capable of asserting its

inherent right to share fully the soil of South Africa, and to give majority leadership to its government.

At the same time, the ANC sought closer ties of unity in the struggle with other oppressed black people of our country. Through the tireless work of such pioneers of a black united front as Kotane, Dadoo, Monty Naicker and many others an alliance was formed between the ANC and the Transvaal and Natal Indian Congresses following the Defiance Campaign; later it was broadened out to include the Coloured People's Congress, the Congress of Democrats and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. All these bodies endorsed the common programme of the liberation movement, the Freedom Charter, which also had the unqualified approval of the underground Communist Party.

PRESENT-DAY BACKGROUND

Let us look at the background against which the new tide of national consciousness among black people has arisen.

Economically, the living standards of the African people have shown a sharp decline. Their real wages have remained static whilst the corresponding cost of living index which knows no colour bar, has spiralled upwards in leaps and bounds. This long-term trend was confirmed by the Johannesburg City Council in its report in March, 1971 when it admitted that:

"Bantu wages barely keep pace with the rising cost of living and are a matter of extreme concern. The general mass of Bantu have not really improved their positions financially in the two decades 1946-1966."

Whole communities of the African people continue to be callously uprooted and dumped on unproductive areas and in congested ghettos creating a vast army of unemployed. As late as April 1971, it was estimated that the real number of unemployed African workers in South Africa was in the ratio of one out of four in a population of roughly 17 million Africans. This revelation obliged racist Prime Minister Vorster to make the rare confession that:

"The greatest danger confronting South Africa is not so much the threat from outside her borders, serious though that may be, but mass unemployment and disturbed race relations."

The *Financial Mail*, Johannesburg of 24 April, 1970 was quick to add a sharp warning that:

"Otherwise South Africa will have revolution. . . . A rising tide of black grief and unemployment, in town and country, is the greatest threat imaginable to the white man."

On the other hand, the systematic exploitation of the tremendously cheap African labour force from which maximum profits are being extracted, is used as a formidable wall of privilege to protect the interests of the white minority. Investors from the Western countries share equally if not more in this crime against the oppressed African people in South Africa.

To reject people as a people and accept them only as beasts of burden is to imply a condition of the non-identity of those people. It is this distortion of man which the African people have refused to accept at every turn of their struggle. They object to being compartmentalised, herded and separated into tribal units as though they were for sale like cattle in a pen.

The resurgent black consciousness that is taking place in South Africa today has been given an emotional twist both in the Afrikaans and the English-language press, in order to create a 'laager' mentality among the white people. Attempts have been made to depict it as 'Black Power' exclusiveness, meaning black chauvinism. Perhaps not surprisingly liberal elements among the white population have expressed doubts and fears, possibly because of a lack of understanding of the current situation. But more likely at the back of those doubts is the fear of losing the luxury of deciding for and the ordering of the affairs of black people. Those days of smug responsibility and paternalism are now over. The black man is determined to drag himself out of the rut of servitude.

'Black consciousness' in the context of South African politics is not a negation of the programme adopted by the African people since the inception of the African National Congress in 1912. Rather, it is an extension of that process which has all along sought to assert the dignity of the African people in a country suffocated by white domination.

After a period of relative quiet, we have seen a new, vigorous, upsurge of strikes by African workers. Sections of the rural population who have been ordered to leave their land by the racist regime are resisting. Black students are asserting their national pride and rejecting the standards laid down by the white supremacists. Voices of protest are emerging

even from such unexpected quarters as African chiefs, officials of the Bantustans.

This development among Chiefs who are civil servants, is clearly a reflection of pressure from below, the pressure of the masses.

But white progressives cannot delude themselves into thinking that the element of hatred will never evince itself in the event of a violent confrontation erupting between the black people and the white supremacists. It should be firmly appreciated that the confrontation will not be between man and man but between man and the vicious racist monster which has created, over a period of three centuries, orphans of children and widows of black wives whilst their fathers and husbands languish in prison dungeons solely for their political convictions. It will be hatred aroused by the thousands of premature deaths of children who die from malnutrition and disease in a land of plenty. Hatred for wanton carnage rained by trigger-happy police on innocent men, women and children during peaceful demonstrations. Hatred for the white-supremacist capitalist who has forcibly dispossessed the African people of the land and turned them into a huge reservoir of cheap migrant labour. It will be hatred instigated by the diabolic indifference of the white supremacists to the dignity of black people whose families are torn apart at the whim of a white official, whose families are uprooted from their traditional homes with the heartlessness of a devil and dumped on uncultivable lands. In that eventuality, the return of their dignity, their land and the restoration of their inalienable human rights will be their justification.

ON GUARD

Nonetheless we should be on our guard, and heed the timely words of Dr. Dadoo in his report to the plenary meeting of the Communist Party Central Committee:

"It must be recognised that the term in itself, 'black consciousness', does not express a coherent programme, still less an ideology. Within the ranks of those who express this slogan, in addition to determined and honest patriots, may be found those who would seek to achieve merely the advancement of privileged strata while leaving the masses where they were before; to displace the black working class from the

leading role which it has rightly assumed in generations of bitter struggle; or to submerge the emerging African nation with its own languages, culture and traditions, into an amorphous movement whose identity is based merely on skin colour.

We must especially be on our guard against those inside and outside our movement who jump on to the bandwagon of black consciousness for their own ulterior purposes whether it be for their business advancement or as a cover for political careerism."

One of the government's grand strategies has been to embark on a conscious drive to cultivate a black middle class with which to cushion itself from the wrath of the masses.

In the Bantustans for example, the government set up the Bantu Investment Corporation to give loans for the establishment of African undertakings. In time, it became evident that such loans were extended mainly to those individuals apologetic for its policies and intent only on enriching themselves. The racist regime believed that it was this class which would, purely for reasons of self interest, remain committed to the evil policies of apartheid.

In the urban areas, small businessmen have also seized on the opportunity to promote their interests as businessmen of other racial groups were being ejected in line with the government policy of racial segregation. They are becoming more vocal in their campaign of 'Buy Black'. Schemes such as co-operatives are relegated to the background so as not to give benefits to many.

At the same time, certain self-motivated intellectuals have seen in the resurgence of 'black consciousness' the chance to revive exclusive clubs of the learned few. A movement to bring to the fold the great mass of the people is to them anathema.

These tendencies are not new nor indeed surprising. Throughout the history of struggle in any part of the world these classes have been noted for their willingness to submit or negotiate rather than face the enemy in decisive mass struggle. Experience has shown that mass mobilisation has neutralised them, whilst repression has terrorised them.

In a situation of repression, where the people's movements are outlawed, political opportunists often attempt to exploit the absence of popular and accepted leaders of the people. Such elements are liable to embrace 'black consciousness' in an effort to set themselves up as demagogues and 'leaders'.

At the present stage of the development of the national struggle, exclusiveness and narrow chauvinistic nationalism would only harm and hamper the cause of the Revolution. Historically and politically the situation is such that the main content of our Revolution is the liberation of the African people who form the majority of the population and shoulder the main burden of national oppression and exploitation. It is therefore beyond dispute that the African National Congress should lead the struggle for national liberation. But, in the final analysis, the Revolution will be made by the broad masses of our country — including patriots and revolutionaries from all racial groups.

Apart from weaknesses which are inherent in all societies evolving towards freedom, black consciousness is a healthy development in the cause of the struggle of the oppressed black people of South Africa. It is a positive growth and if given effective guidance and leadership, will serve to broaden the mass revolutionary consciousness and resistance of the people. As Lenin said, "... We cannot vouch for any particular path of national development, for we are marching to our class goal along all possible paths".* Without doubt, the new phase of armed struggle upon which the African National Congress has embarked for the effectual transfer of political power to the African majority, will profoundly influence the future thinking and organisation of our people.

* Collected Works, Vol. 20. p. 413.

THE SPIRIT OF BAMBATA

(to Dube and Tiro and every fallen hero)

by A.N.C. Kumalo

We will meet
Dube and Tiro
and every fallen hero
on the brow of the hill
on the brow of the hill
when the Nation is free.

Dube and Tiro
warriors in an impi
the spirit of Bambatha
beat in their breast.

Dube and Tiro
true sons of Luthuli
the spirit of Bambatha
beat in their breast.

Dube and Tiro
heroes of black children
the spirit of Bambatha
beat in their breast.

No lash, shackle
terror bomb or bullet
no Tyrant's bloody gallow
no belching cannon
can subdue
the spirit of Bambatha
beating in the breast
of Dube and Tiro
beating in the breast
of every black child.

There can be
no submission
no hesitation
no rest
before retribution —

Hintsa, Makana
Sekhukhuni, Bambatha
Luthuli, Saloojee
Nkosi, Ngudle . . .

Yebo madoda —
seize the cudgel!
from those who are martyred
who fall in the struggle.

We will meet
Dube and Tiro
and every fallen hero
on the brow of the hill
on the brow of the hill
when the Nation is free.

SOCIALISM

the live reality

by A. Lerumo

Regular readers of this journal will recall that the first article in the present series (*Africa at the Crossroads*, No. 56 First Quarter 1974) pointed out that nearly all countries in our continent are, more or less, in a stage of transition. Modern economies, based on the exchange of commodities for money, exist mostly in the towns. But millions in rural areas still live in pre-capitalist economies, feudal or communal subsistence farming.

This backwardness is largely the responsibility of the imperialist powers who conquered and carved up Africa among themselves, enriched themselves by seizing her wealth, enslaving and exploiting her people, isolated our countries and arrested their development. They must be made to pay for these crimes.

But the African peoples themselves, having won formal independence in forty countries and struggling to complete the process in the rest, cannot afford to mark time or still less to go back into the past. To overcome backwardness, to overcome poverty, ignorance, and disease, to build modern economies affording employment and decent living

standards for all — these are absolute conditions for the maintenance of our hard-won independence and the attainment of true equality in the world family of nations.

The harsh lessons of the appalling famine now devastating Africa South of the Sahara from West to East dare not be ignored. We must develop or perish.

So far there is little that has been said that would be disputed by any thinking African patriot. But the key question that must be answered without delay is this: *along which path are we to develop?* There are only two modern social and economic systems: capitalism and socialism. Any other path is a figment of the imagination — or, more likely, a deceitful label to disguise one or other variety of capitalism. Harold Wilson and Willy Brandt may call themselves socialists but everyone knows that Britain and the German Federal Republic are capitalist states from top to bottom and, though they are Prime Ministers, they have no intention of changing this state of affairs.

Socialism is no longer just a theory, a daring hypothesis conceived by such men of genius as Marx, Engels and Lenin.

GIANT IMPROVEMENTS

Socialism has existed as a reality in the world for over 56 years since the great October Socialist Revolution in Russia. Today socialism is the way of life, the daily experience of hundreds of millions of people in vast regions of Europe, Asia and the American island of Cuba. It is a world system, embracing a third of the world's population in fourteen countries.

If we want to know what socialism is like, how it works, how it compares with capitalism, the alternative world system, we do not need to speculate. We must turn our attention to this living reality. Socialism has transformed every aspect of the lives of the people of this true 'New World'. It has immeasurably raised not only their living standards, but also their cultural level and their social outlook. But as 'man must eat before he can think' we should first of all consider the giant improvement brought about in the material life of the people of the socialist community.

Though, for historical and national reasons the political structures of the socialist countries differ from one another, they have this in common. By abolishing private ownership of the means of production, under the leadership of Marxist-Leninist Parties they have ended the exploitation of man by man and eliminated the glaring inequalities of income between the 'idle rich' and the working people. Socialist ownership of the means of production has made possible rational planning, based not on the ups and downs of the market but the needs of the people. Proper planning has brought the most spectacular increases in production in history.

In 1917, before the revolution, Russia was a relatively backward and underdeveloped capitalist country. Its industrial output was less than three per cent of the world total. Despite the years lost in fighting imperialist wars of intervention after 1917 and the frightful damage and losses suffered during the Nazi invasion of 1941-1945, socialist planning and the creative work of the people advanced the Soviet Union to the front rank of the world's industrial powers.

The only country that is still ahead of the USSR in gross output volume is now the United States. But the pace of Soviet development is closing the gap. In 1950 Soviet output was less than 30 per cent of that of the USA. Today it is over 75 per cent. Capitalist newspapers and other media have always tried to conceal or minimise the truth about socialist economic development. But sometimes they let the cat out of the bag. *The Times* of London is well-known for its built-in anti-Soviet bias. Yet in a feature article (2 January 1974) its Moscow correspondent, Edmund Stevens, writes about Soviet optimism in the new year, "bolstered" by a "record grain harvest". He continues:

"Also important is the increase in industrial output last year — 7.3 per cent compared to the planned target of 5.8 per cent — while the growth of national income amounted to 6.3 per cent compared to the previous annual average of 4.6 per cent."

"Soviet citizens," adds Stevens, "derive additional satisfaction by comparing the conditions in the Soviet Union to those in much of the world". (That is of course, though Stevens doesn't bother to add it, 'the capitalist world.') "The Russians can point to the absence of bombs and industrial strife, and the crime rate is doubtless one of the world's lowest," Stevens goes on:

"The Soviet citizen is not concerned with falling stock prices since

he owns no shares and there is no stock exchange. Nor is there a petrol shortage, or an energy crisis or runaway inflation."

In fact, he may well have added, there is no inflation at all, 'runaway' or any other kind. Rents have remained stable for the last 50 years. In fact they are the lowest in the world, fixed at an average of 5 per cent of income. Apart from a few luxury goods, prices have remained stable or even decreased.

A similar story can be told about other socialist countries. Over the past three years, for example, Poland's industrial output rose by about 33 per cent and agricultural output by nearly 20 per cent. In Bulgaria, industry has multiplied since 1948 by over 20 times, while gross agricultural output has doubled. Like Bulgaria, pre-socialist Hungary was, in the words of its deputy chairman, M. Timar, "an economically backward and dependent country on the periphery of Western Europe" It has become "a fast-growing, prosperous industrial state".

Socialist Czechoslovakia has made a brilliant recovery from the crisis of 1968-1969 during which revisionist leadership and downright subversion came close to ruining the economy. In the two years of the current five-year plan, the national income has increased by more than 11 per cent, industrial output 14 per cent and construction 20 per cent. Particularly remarkable has been the spectacular advance of Slovakia, traditionally the most backward and undeveloped part of the country. During the years of the bourgeois republic, it suffered massive unemployment which forced hundreds of thousands of Slovaks to emigrate to the United States and other countries. "At present," reported Joseph Lenart, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Slovakia, "Slovak industry employs more than 650,000 workers and office employees compared with 120,000 before the war. In 25 years labour productivity has grown 5.5 fold."

The German Democratic Republic, the first socialist state on the soil of Germany, has made amazing progress in the quarter-century of its existence. Desolated by the effects of the Nazis' war, and their 'scorched-earth' tactics, the country at its birth was virtually devoid of natural resources and heavy industry, all of which were stimulated in the west — the present-day Federal Republic of Germany. Socialist planning, Soviet assistance, as well as the creative participation of the working people have completely transformed the country. The gross national product went up, between 1949 and 1972, from 51,530 to

307,622 million marks: the national income from 22,320 to 120,120 million. The tens of thousands of young people who went to last year's Youth Festival in Berlin came back with glowing accounts of the country's progress in every field of human endeavour.

The following table will illustrate the dynamic growth rate of the socialist countries from 1950 to 1972. Some figures have been added from typical capitalist countries for the sake of comparison, though it should be remembered that the period in question was for most of them more favourable than the present stage of acute crisis which we will discuss in a subsequent article.

INDUSTRIAL GROWTH RATES OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES*

(1950=100)

	1965	1970	1972
Bulgaria	691	1,200	1,400
Hungary	386	523	589
GDR	392	537	603
Mongolia	446	714	869
Poland	523	782	938
Rumania	649	1,100	1,400
USSR	458	689	791
Czechoslovakia	364	505	575
Dem. Rep. of Vietnam (1955=100)	947	1,000	1,200
Korean People's Dem. Rep. (1949=100)	1,200	2,100	—
Yugoslavia	434	582	692
Great Britain	160	178	184
USA	199	238	255
FRG	319	426	452
France	232	316	518

*Source: *World Marxist Review*, May 1974.

It will be noted that the most rapid growth-rates are precisely those of countries which previously suffered most seriously from under-development, such as Bulgaria, Rumania and Vietnam.

THE NATIONAL QUESTION

This differential rate is by no means accidental. As is well known scientific socialism, with its cardinal feature of proletarian internationalism, is diametrically opposed to national oppression, racialism or discrimination in any shape or form. All citizens of socialist countries

enjoy equal rights, irrespective of race, nationality or sex. Preaching or practice of racialism is a crime with serious penalties. The constitution of the pioneer socialist state, the Soviet Union, provides for self-determination for the various nations of the country, who have their own sovereign and independent Republics.

However formal, constitutional equality does not have much reality if in fact economic inequality, arising from historical injustices, is maintained. For this reason, through the self-sacrifice and class consciousness of the Russian workers and others in the more developed regions, priority in investment and development was given precisely to those regions — the Asian and other Republics — where Tsarist colonialism, neglect and exploitation had led to the most serious underdevelopment.

The result is that the 250 million people in every region of the USSR enjoy approximately the same standards of living, of education, of social services and of opportunities. This is a great historic achievement of socialist society which has disproved in living practice all poisonous theories of 'superior' and 'inferior' races, and for the first time in history has solved the national question.

The same principle has been carried out in the practice of the international socialist community.

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

All the other socialist countries have been helped immeasurably by the prior existence of the pioneer socialist state, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. Its vast, advanced and diversified economy has been able to provide the fraternal socialist countries generously with up-to-date plant and equipment, with fuel and raw materials, with technical blueprints and facilities for the training of specialists, with a great and stable market for their products at fixed prices not subject to the fluctuations of the capitalist world.

Most of the socialist countries have combined their economic strength for more rational planning and division of labour in the *Council of Mutual Economic Assistance* (CMEA) which was founded 25 years ago. Its members are the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, the GDR, Rumania, Hungary, Mongolia and Cuba.

It is not hard to understand that by pooling their scientific and technical knowledge and combining their skills and resources, these countries can make much more rapid advances than would be possible if each went ahead on its own.

To this we must add another important consideration. Under socialism and in accordance with the internationalist principles of Marxism-Leninism, it becomes possible to plan for a long period ahead. The long series of successful *five-year plans*, inaugurated in the Soviet Union and carried out also in the fraternal socialist countries, demonstrate this beyond doubt. Socialism is free from the uncontrollable ups and downs (booms and slumps) and the jerky 'stop-go' effect that characterises capitalism.

The CMEA countries, which have already reached a very high degree of socialist economic integration, without any of them sacrificing any of their independence and sovereignty, agreed in 1971 on a comprehensive programme covering the next twenty years. This grandiose overall programme foresees the steady growth of joint productive enterprises, of international specialisation and division of labour, reaching in some cases — notably in the prognosis of demand for fuel and power — up to the year 2000!

Already many major projects are in operation. The 'Friendship' oil pipeline connects all the European CMEA countries with the Soviet Union. Since the first section was completed ten years ago it has supplied more than 170 million tons of Soviet petroleum to partner countries. In 1975 when a second section will be completed it will supply as much as 50 million tons a year.

A transit line now under construction will soon supply all CMEA countries with high-quality Soviet natural gas. A similar grid system pools their electricity resources.

As Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union told the Party's 24th Congress:

The world system of socialism is becoming a harmonious family of peoples who are jointly constructing and protecting a new society and enriching each other by exchanging experiences and knowledge . . . a firmly consolidated family in which the people of the earth can visualise the ideal of a future world-wide community of free human beings.

Socialist economic integration differs sharply in its character from the

sort of enforced relationship imposed upon under-developed countries by the colonialist and neo-colonialist bourgeoisie: a relationship once described by Roy Welensky as "a partnership between the rider and the horse".

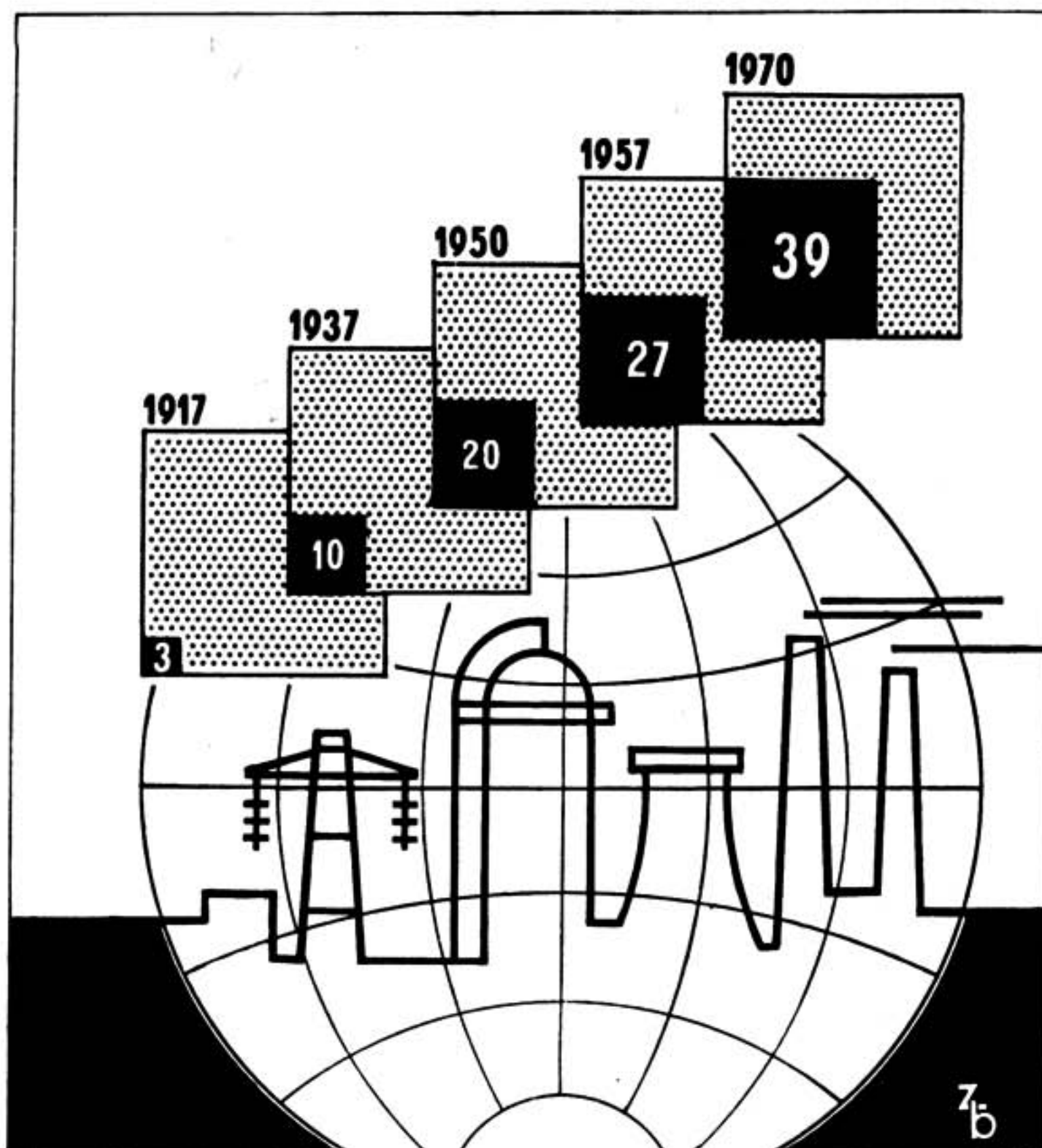
Most of the exports of the once under-developed countries, like Bulgaria and Rumania, to their CMEA partners consist not of raw materials but of sophisticated industrial products, and their own economies have rapidly become industrialised.

Moreover, unlike the 'integration' between the capitalist states of Western Europe (the European Economic Community — EEC — an arrangement between the monopoly capitalist concerns in which each is only waiting for a chance to cut the throat of its competitor and rival) the CMEA countries cooperate on a socialist basis of mutual benefit and harmonising of common interest.

The results, above all in industrial production, are apparent if we consider the fantastic advance of the gross industrial output of the socialist countries as compared with world figures. As shown graphically in the accompanying diagram the share of the socialist countries in output has leapt from a mere 3 per cent in 1917 (20 per cent in 1950) to 39 per cent in 1970.

These figures reflect an economic system of steady growth, at an increasing rate, compared with an ever fluctuating growth rate in the capitalist countries. All the indications at the time of writing (April 1974) are that the main capitalist countries (USA, Britain, the German Federal Republic, France, Japan), following a period of relative — if jumpy — expansion, have entered a phase of acute economic crisis marked by recession.

It can be predicted with confidence what the continuance of these trends implies. Within the remaining years of this century, if not sooner, *the socialist economic system will have overtaken and surpassed the capitalist economic system in the production of goods to satisfy human needs. Socialism is already the decisive factor. It is becoming the prevailing mode of production in the world.* During the cold war period, mobilised by the United States, monopolies dreamt of making a world come-back and 'rolling back' the tide of socialism by force. This dream was based on the assumption of unchallengeable superiority — economic, technical and military — of the capitalist system. The dream has proved to be an illusion. The assumption was false.



Share of socialist countries in world industrial output

in per cent

While it was no more than 3 per cent in 1917 the share of the socialist states in the world's industrial output had risen to 39 per cent in 1970. Industrial production in the CMEA countries went up by 7.8 per cent in 1971, while the corresponding figure was 2.6 per cent in the European Common Market. The steady rate of economic growth in the socialist countries has constantly changed the international correlation of forces in favour of socialism.

Not only is socialism a more efficient and effective method of improving overall production. It is also a more humane way of life than any that has existed over the eons of human existence.

In ending the exploitation of the working class by the private owners of the means of production, socialism at the same time strikes a death-blow at every form of exploitation, discrimination and unfairness.

Only scientific socialism makes possible a comprehensive solution to the complex problems of *national oppression* created by capitalist society, especially in its dying phase — imperialism.

In the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist community of nations, it has been convincingly proved — in deeds and not only in words — that the ideal of human equality and brotherhood can and will be realised. The peoples of formerly 'backward', neglected, exploited regions, victims of oppression, have for the first time in history an equal opportunity to develop their capabilities to the full and to attain parity in living and cultural standards and social development. The working class of the former oppressing nations, by their conscious sacrifices have rectified the historic injustices of the past. There is a steady levelling-up throughout the socialist community in which all nations and national groups enjoy not only formally equal rights but also a true equality of living standards, educational and cultural levels, of language and status, of national independence and self-determination.

In the fields of education and culture, the socialist countries are fast outstripping all previous standards of achievement. Illiteracy has been completely eliminated, all children receive free education, both primary and advanced. There are more students, scientists, specialists and graduates in the socialist countries — in relation to their populations — than in the most advanced of capitalist societies.

The age-old phenomenon of the subordination of and discrimination against women is consistently and rapidly being eliminated in the countries of socialism.

Access to all fields of employment, equal pay for equal work, encouragement to participate at all levels in public affairs, extension of creches, kindergartens, public catering and other services — these are milestones on the road to women's liberation. Together with the elimination in men's outlook of backward attitudes, bred of centuries of exploitive society, they constitute a sure material foundation for

the ending of domestic servitude and the building of a new society of equals.

Socialism is swiftly closing the gap between the life-styles of the working people of the towns and of the country-side. Farms are becoming more and more mechanised, and industrialised; more like factories. Schools, cultural and community facilities are developing in the villages and collective farms. Modern socialist town planning and anti-pollution measures are bringing green spaces and fresh air to the cities

CARE FOR THE PEOPLE

In no sphere does socialism demonstrate its superiority more clearly than in its concern with and care for the people — particularly the children, the aged, the ill — who are unable to fend for themselves. Creches, kindergartens and schools are free. The prospect of illness ceases to be a financial nightmare, for medical services are ample and provided without charge. Invalids who are unable to work, and men and women who reach retirement age, receive adequate and guaranteed pensions. Ample facilities and opportunities are provided for rest and recreation (free, or greatly subsidised holiday resorts, for instance) for culture and sport.

The Soviet Union now builds more housing than any other country in the world. Between 1966 and 1970 a total of 518 million square metres of housing was built and 55 million people (nearly a quarter of of the population!) were able to move into new flats. In 1970 2,283,000 new flats were built — compared with 1,466,000 in the USA.

Low rents, transport fares and taxes; fixed and reducing prices for food, clothing and other purchases; constantly rising wages — these are the characteristics of the advanced socialist society which is developing in the socialist community of nations.

In brief, socialism is daily proving itself in practice to be not only the most efficient, but also the most humane, just and truly civilised social system ever.

* * * * *

If in this article I have stressed the splendid positive achievements of socialism during the first, brief half-century of its existence, this is in large measure because such facts as these are hard to come by in most African countries. In fascist South Africa, of course, where the Communist Party and other progressive organisations have been illegal for 24 years, no good word about socialism is ever published in the daily press. Even in the *Rand Daily Mail*, which has pretensions to being progressive and democratic, hardly a day passes without an article carrying the most scurrilous anti-Soviet rubbish which would never pass muster in European or American capitalist newspapers, where better-informed readers are able and legally entitled to reply and protest.

Even in the free countries of Independent Africa the press is for the most part under the control of wealthy, often foreign, concerns and individuals whose interests lie in suppressing the truth about socialism.

Certainly the countries of socialism are not perfect and without faults. They still bear some birthmarks of the capitalist societies from which they emerged. The working class, having won power, has had to fight hard every inch of the way against the resistance of the former exploiting classes with the support and intervention of the imperialist powers, and this fight, in one form or another, still continues. It has left its scars.

Marxist-Leninists, as is known, look forward to a still higher stage of social development — communism, in which scarcity will be eliminated, everyone will contribute to the community what he can and receive from it what he needs; where the human personality will flower to its fullest capacity; where the dreams of all the world's greatest thinkers of the brotherhood of the human race will be realised.

We have to measure the merits of existing socialism not against some abstract and impossible standards which exist only in the minds of various philosophers, but against the realities of the present-day world, and against the particular reality of the rival social system: capitalism.

What are the main features of present-day capitalism, as it exists in the developed countries of Western Europe and North America, as well as in some African states? And what is the relevance of these

realities to Africa? Is it inevitable that all African countries must traverse the capitalist road, or is there some way of avoiding this historical stage? And, if so, how shall we set about it?

These are some of the questions it is proposed to deal with in future articles in this series.

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AGAINST LITERARY APARTHEID

by GALA

The rich literary tradition of the African peoples played an important part in the national liberation movement as an artistic and political factor. It was and continues to be a source of inspiration, a background and basis for popularity for many works of modern authors. It was that sphere of intellectual and artistic life which was relatively free from colonial deformations, and whose renaissance since the beginning of this century has helped in the spirit of enlightenment and strengthened the ideological background of liberation movements. In short, its renaissance formed the intellectual basis for the preparation of the African masses and became therefore an aspect of that movement.

This emergence of a cultural revolution on our continent has given rise to manifold investigations of our art and literature arising from the universal interest it has stimulated. In her introduction to A.C. Jordan's *Toward An African Literature*, Mrs L.N. Jordan remarks: 'This outpouring of writings on African literature, and other things African, began in the late 1950s and early 1960s. By no mere coincidence,

this is the period in which most of Africa became independent . . . However, most of the books on Africa by American and European Academicians are far too superficial, because most of these scholars have only a superficial knowledge and understanding of Africa.'

The South African writer Nadine Gordimer should by no means be regarded as a foreigner to Africa and her attempts at an examination of literature may be welcomed as coming from someone at least permanently on the scene. SPROCAS (Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society) in collaboration with Ravan Press, Johannesburg, recently produced her investigation of African literature in the English language under the title *The Black Interpreters – Notes on African Writing*, the first section of which deals with *Modern African Fiction in English*.

An examination of literature in one language need not necessarily mean a restricted vision of the subject and should not prevent the examiner from relating it to the whole panorama of writing. The facet is part of the whole diamond and it is difficult to do justice to a part without taking into account its relation to the whole. This requires a wider effort and we must admire the work done by such as Ezekiel Mphahlele whose *African Image*, first published in 1962, has recently been updated by him and the new edition appearing this year, which of course does not concern itself with the English language only. Nevertheless, Miss Gordimer has chosen to present her subject from her own point of view and her effort warrants inclusion in any comments to be made on the question of African writing.

Before dealing with modern writing in English, Miss Gordimer must of necessity define where modern African writing as a whole started. She claims that modern African writing has its beginnings in the 'Negritude' movement 'because it was motivated by a deep need in which black people everywhere were at one.' This movement originated with the Caribbean's search 'to create a lost identity' which was to be found in Africa. 'The impetus of reaffirmation was brought by the Negritude movement, came across seas and language barriers and filtered down through the thinly-spread African intelligentsia . . . So it was a movement from outside Africa yet it could be the beginning of modern African writing.'

This however sounds as if one must accept, according to Nadine Gordimer, that modern literature is divorced from old or traditional

literature and that it is really a sort of artificial transplant. Surely 'modern' literature must have something to do with the development of Africa itself from old into new, and that must for the writer also mean the development of his milieu. In South Africa the new forms of economic, political and social structure of society at the beginning of this century produced new attitudes and reactions towards their surroundings from among the people which were reflected in the development of new forms of their own economic, political and social organisation as well in their cultural expression. On the continental scene the change from colonialism to independence must also have inevitably had an influence on the writing, among other things, from those parts. So 'modern' literature must have some relation to its time, a new historical situation, and not merely to an idea which might have 'filtered down'.

Miss Gordimer explains Negritude as the 'need to stop hanging about outside the White man's door . . . to present oneself, in full self-acceptance, in the opposing dignity of one's own house.' One wonders if this is necessarily a 'modern' idea, or whether it is not a convenient generalisation which does not take into consideration that the assertion of 'Negritude', or the 'African personality' as it is also called, might mean different things under different circumstances, since African aspirations have different priorities from area to area, level to level, and cannot be casually lumped under one general heading.

THE AFRICAN PERSONALITY

On one level, as Mphahlele states (*The African Image*), "The personality that Nkrumah talked about was a beacon on the battlefield, a thrust, an assertion of the African's presence."

The theory of the African personality evolved over long years of the African peoples' struggle, is a positive and fruitful concept stimulating the solution of urgent problems in modern Africa. It is based on the creative idea whose realisation helps to rebuild a completely independent and spiritually rich Africa on new heights.

On the cultural level the nascent new forms of art in Africa, the development of the theatre, the film industry and the opera, parallel with the traditional forms of art, show that the African personality

seeks new means of expression to go with the old. To refuse these new means would impoverish language, culture, psychology and degenerate the African personality.

The literary heritage of the African peoples became a forming element of the new social consciousness, because of its subjects, its content of reality and humanism and last but not least — through the representation of the African cultural tradition — because of its mission of enlightenment. This heritage has been integrated in the modern arts and literature and was one of their starting points. This process marks in its literary aspects the beginning of a comprehensive cultural revolution. Before political independence it meant mainly the fight for the cultural emancipation from colonial deformation. Now the main task seems to be the further development of national cultures, deeply concerned with the progress of the African peoples.

While concerned with the development of our national cultures, in the expression of our own art forms we inevitably select and digest all that is best in the cultural heritage of East and West in order to strengthen ourselves, which means that in progressive development it becomes impossible to remain 'in the opposing dignity of one's own house,' which would be rather like accepting a sort of cultural 'Bantustan'.

Mphahlele says that in its literal meaning, 'Negritude as an artistic programme is unworkable for modern Africa. It pegs an emotion, a thought, a wish. I am not a Christian or a Muslim. But I would still appreciate a poem whose motivation was Christian or Muslim or whatever if it did not trap me there . . .'

So, what are modern Africans writing about? Miss Gordimer asks. Certainly not what modern Europe is writing about, she replies. "If one compares (African) themes with those that have pre-occupied Europe and America over roughly the same period, one is struck by the differences between them".

'The differences' which she discovers arise out of a rather superficial view, nor does she explore the reasons for them vary adequately, concentrating more on academic and somewhat cursory comparisons between works from Europe and America on one hand and Africa on the other 'over roughly the same period'. But since none of these areas have developed equally over any period one cannot expect to see identical pictures of these areas and so one is surprised that the com-

parison should arise is the form in which it does.

'The angry young man of European novels of the Fifties and early Sixties does not exist in African literature. Neither does . . . the man and woman, often an academic, in whom the fruits of mass culture and/or intellectual privilege have produced sour fermentation of disillusion with the material satisfaction offered by an affluent industrial society . . . Another European theme that has no place in African literature is that of the problem of communication itself . . . European and American writers find themselves on the very edge of being. More and more novels written by them deal with gross abnormalities, both physical and mental. One could say that sickened by the madness of this world, the appalling logic of deformity and insanity attracts their exploration.'

It is of course possible that we are at divergence with Nadine Gordimer as to what is to be classed as good literature and bad literature, and it is difficult to compare chalk with cheese. If we accept for our purpose that general interest in life is the content of art, then we must agree that different *priorities* does not exclude the common interest in the problems of life.

Miss Gordimer assumes, or that is the impression she gives, that writing in Europe or America has taken one road and in Africa another.

All examples of good literature must have something in common, irrespective of their language, country and the level of development of the society in which they originate. Otherwise we are liable to accept a form of 'separate development' of literature, or, as we have indicated before, a sort of apartheid in literature. As Miss Gordimer puts it: 'What are the most striking features of the way Africa sees itself and its relation to the rest of the world? Well, to begin with, some attitudes that are likely to be surprising to the world.'

The African writer might be as interested in 'life', in the problems of his own society as the European or American is in his, but they will not produce identical works, since their experiences and priorities are different. But while creative work is an individual act, the sum total of these acts is the artistic chronicle. The writer's participation in the development of life is measured *by the ideological artistic level of his work, the depth of his depiction of events and problems*. The writer must find the epicentre of events and determine his place in them, his

point of view. Then he will find application for his talent and personal experience and will worthily serve the cause of aesthetic and social progress.

There are writers who work in a kind of vacuum, who stand apart from events, who do not maintain close ties with the truth of their ethos, their source of inspiration. An atmosphere of vacuum cannot stimulate works that contribute towards the common progressive character of life and literature. If we are concerned with this characteristic of literature then we must distinguish between the wood and the trees and so discover that what African literature reveals need not 'be surprising to the world'.

We are witnessing how the cultural heritage of Africa is transformed into modern, social and political orientated literatures and arts. This is one of the most important tasks of the mentioned cultural revolution and a stirring event in modern and progressive world culture. Perhaps above all it includes a message of humanism to all mankind.

THEME AND CONTENT

But Miss Gordimer distinguishes between 'testifiers' and 'writers who are creating an African literature', going on to say that the former 'like their counterparts, lesser writers all over the world, they take stock-in-trade abstractions of human behaviour and look about for a dummy to dress them in.'

The African writer's choice of theme and plot is viewed as an entirely subjective matter. Giving 'some examples' we are told that 'the would-be writer says to himself: all over Africa village boys have become Prime Ministers and Presidents; I will write a book about a village boy who, like them, leaves home, struggles for an education, forms a political party, resists the colonial authorities, wins over the people and moves into Government House . . . Another would-be writer says to herself . . . it is one of the customs of my country for the husband of a childless woman to take another wife; I will write about a childless woman whose husband takes another wife.'

If this is what is a characteristic of bad writers all over, one must ask why she should then make it an issue in the case of African writers,

and why her criticism of 'overlong and clumsy novels' should be confined to African writers particularly.

It would appear that Nadine Gordimer's contention is that shortcomings and defects in the 'testifiers' are due to these authors giving too much attention to social issues. But softening the social impact has never guaranteed success for any work of art. It is also true that refusal to raise questions of import to all society or substitution of real problems by ones of imaginary importance and the author's self-absorption diminishes a work to the extent that the reader loses interest because of the writer's feelings becoming too subjective. But then we have to distinguish between good and bad writing, not between 'testifiers' and 'writers who are creating an African literature'.

Mphahlele says, "There will always be stubborn and insoluble tensions between the workings of the imagination and the social forces and imperatives it 'criticizes' — more stubborn than we are often prepared to admit; almost as if social reality and the imagination were rejecting each other, like mother and child. There will also be moments of reconciliation between the two realities."

In an open letter (*West Africa*, August, 1962) to an American critic, Martin Tucker, Nigerian writers said: "Writing does not grow on air but is the result of social and other pressures and the desire for self expression. The American Negro of the deep South wrote his novels because of the way he was treated by the Whites, just as Dickens wrote his novels because of the social injustices of his time."

Quoting another American critic, Irving Howe, in that "where freedom is absent, politics is fate" Miss Gordimer points out that "in African literature politics does not occur as a vulgar interruption of the more exalted pursuits of life." She does not explain how politics is distinguishable from or has no relation to 'the more exalted pursuits of life' although even this is not identified; but tells us that 'novels of political action' are a category of African literature to be considered separately. We are not sure that she infers that such novels are not a feature of writing from other areas, but she makes no comparisons with English language literature from other areas at this level although such works certainly exist.

On the whole Miss Gordimer has locked herself in by her own restricted viewpoint. While her attempt to give us some insight into African literature in the English language may be admirable, unfortu-

nately she also gives us the uncomfortable feeling of being a student in the presence of some pompous schoolmistress who knows all about it and defies us to go beyond the limited bounds of her assessments.

Nowhere can we find any view of the historical situation from which English literature emerged in Africa. It is simply there and that's that. One gets the added impression that she has studiously confined her examination to Black writers so as not to involve White writers from Africa (there are such) in the English language, as if it is less complicated to compare Black writers with European and American writers, even though she defines African writing as 'writing done in any language by Africans themselves and by others whatever skin colour who have shared with Africans the experience of having been shaped, mentally and spiritually, by Africa rather than anywhere else in the world.'

So we cannot be blamed if we get the feeling that her study is one from the viewpoint of exclusiveness, albeit wholly unconscious or unintentional; as though she and others of her race have nothing to do with the future of Africa and African literature.

After an examination of the themes of several writers, mainly Nigerian, she asks what main trends African English literature shows in its development. This question itself isolates the language literature from the trends of African literature as a whole in its historical development, as if it is the language that determines its trend. But even this question Miss Gordimer cannot answer in terms of African reality. Instead she borrows from George Lukacs a formula which asserts "critical realism as not only the link with the great literature of the past, but also the literature that points to the future." And so she concludes with amazing aplomb "there seems to me little doubt that African English literature's best writers are critical realists, and that this is the direction in which literature is developing."

"In these novels, as in those others in which politics is fate — 'environment, fetter and goal' — there is little to indicate that that fate seeks to determine itself in terms of profound social change."

But African development and African literature have not come to a full stop. As Nadine Gordimer herself says, "The theme of *Let My People Go* has not come near to its ultimate expression yet." African life, saturated with turbulent political events, is exerting an ever increasing influence over writers. One can confidently say that writers

will continue to take subjects from life and that reviewers will have to take facts as they are.

Each writer is able to choose a theme according to his task and artistic leaning, and he is free to do so. But no matter what language he reads in, the reader looks forward to one thing — the truthful living word that can assist him a step higher, to find his place in life and to glimpse the future.

We still live in a complex, exceedingly heterogeneous time. On the one hand we have created a state of affairs under which the agony of simply surviving has become obsolete, on the other hand there are millions of people entirely concerned with making ends meet. The exploitation of man by man and colonialism is guilty of this state of affairs concerning a major part of humanity. Deliverance from the consequences of colonialism is the cause of all mankind, and the problem facing all of world literature.

We all have to understand these consequences in order to deliver man from centuries of inferiority, to revive the human in the human being, to make the spirit of fraternity natural to him. Our common interest lies in the development of genuine internationalism in all the spheres of life, in all manifestations of the human spirit and action. There is no task more insistent, more cardinal, more humane for literature than to strengthen in every man faith in himself and faith in life. For this man must be freed from the vestiges of colonialism that humiliate his psychology, his way of thinking, his idea of himself and the world surrounding him. Up till now the world's culture has been divided into the culture of the East and the culture of the West. The time has come to unite our spiritual resources for the single purpose of serving humanity.

AFRICA:

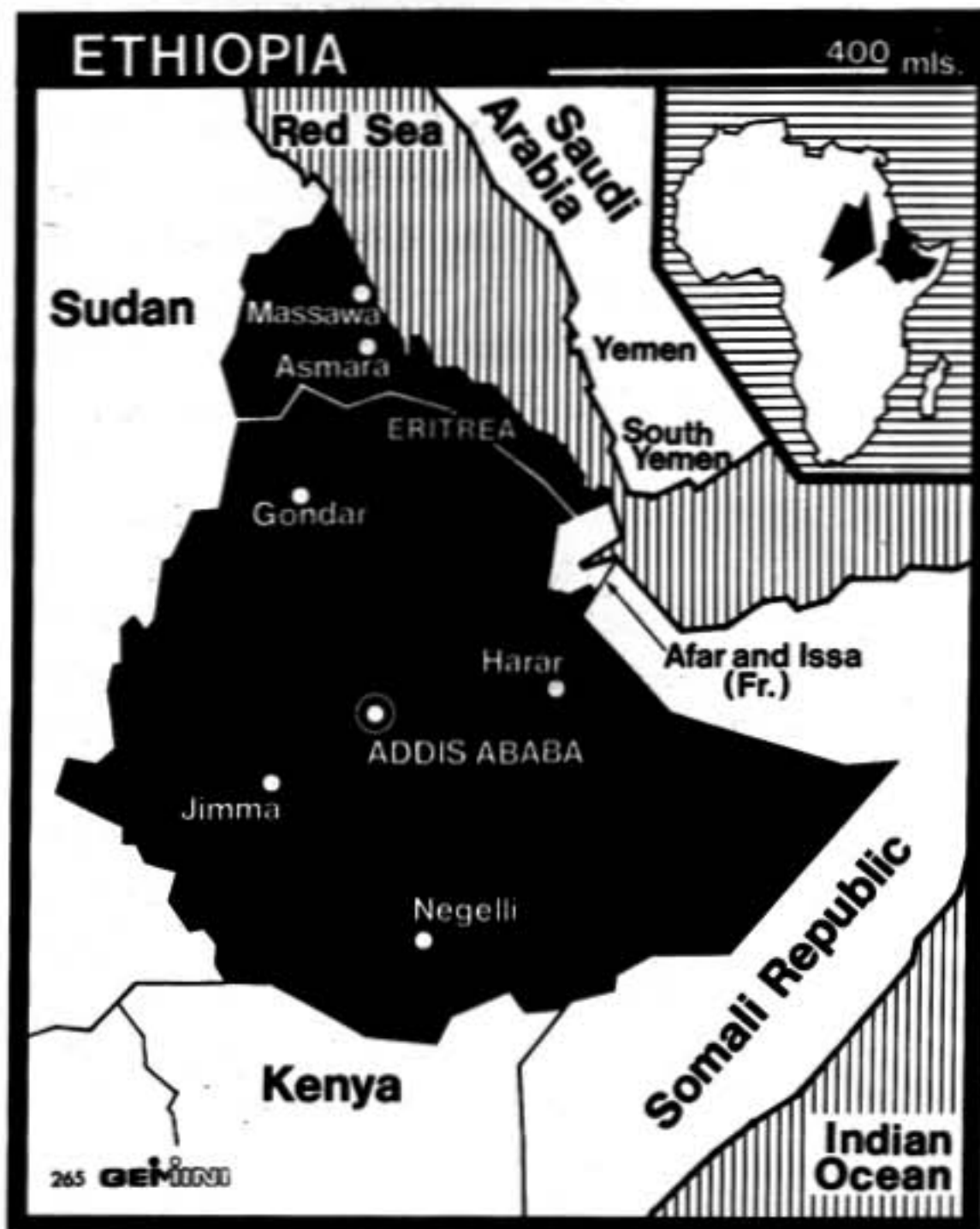
Notes and

Comments

ETHIOPIA IN TURMOIL

The revolutionary surge which has swept over Ethiopia in the last few months still, at the time of writing, shows no signs of dying down. Nor is it yet clear what sort of social system will emerge from the struggle which is in progress. But one thing is clear — the old order is finished. Feudalism and the 20th Century are no longer compatible.

The contradictions in Ethiopian society which have manifested themselves so sharply in the last few months have always been present, but a combination of dictatorial pressures from above, massive corruption, and traditional peasant inertia prevented them from developing. But the drought which has devastated the Sahelian countries, coupled with the oil crisis and galloping inflation, affected all sections of the population. No society can suffer 100,000 deaths from starvation without protest. No economy can stand a 50 per cent increase in the price of petrol (a consequence of the Middle East war) on top of a 25-point increase in the retail price index during 1973 without dislocation. All classes suffered, and all classes revolted — there have been strikes and



demonstrations in every province, involving workers, students, peasants, teachers, civil aviation staff, taxi and lorry drivers, dustmen and sanitary workers, members of the army, navy and air force of all ranks. An uprising of this scale and magnitude must presage fundamental change.

Today, even the future of the monarchy is at stake, held together for the moment by the immense authority and prestige of Haile Selassie. But tomorrow — perhaps when he is gone — what will happen? Even emperors are mortal.

Selassie is now 84 years old. When in 1916, known at that time as Ras Tafari Makonnen, he took over the reigns of power, he gradually secured the unity of the state by curtailing the powers of the regional dukes and increasing the authority of the centre — a traditional process in all feudal societies preludeing the consolidation of the nation-state. The government then appointed the provincial governors, and established a central army in place of the ducal levies.

A year after the coronation of Ras Tafari Makonnen as Haile Selassie, "King of Kings, Lion of Judah", Ethiopia received its first constitution, which introduced political reforms and abolished slavery. In 1923 Ethiopia became a member of the League of Nations. In the thirties there followed the Italian invasion and the Emperor's long exile, bravely borne. With the defeat of the Italian armies in the second world war. Selassie was able to return in triumph to Ethiopia as a liberator. A new constitution was introduced in 1955 extending the franchise and a limited land reform.

Of the 418 million hectares that were affected by the land reform, 95 per cent was handed over to the church, the bureaucracy and officers of the army. The largest of the landowners in the country are known to own as much as $\frac{1}{2}$ million hectares. The peasants, the majority of whom farm under the feudal system, are obliged in many cases to hand over 50 per cent of their crop to the landowner. It is this archaic system of land tenure which has made Ethiopia, a country with large tracts of fertile land and a favourable climate, one of the world's poorest countries. Only 11 per cent of the land is cultivated and even this with the most primitive methods and equipment. Only in a small sector where coffee, vegetables and other cash crops are produced has this primitive method of cultivation been replaced by a more modern one.

Before the present uprisings, the army was responsible for perpetuating the feudal power and the hierarchy which benefited from it. Today the army's role is obscure, with one section acting out of concert with another, all moving in different directions and with different lists of demands. But it is significant that all the demands put forward by all sections, army and civilians alike, include demands for political and economic reform side by side with demands for higher wages. What is also clear is that, up to the time of writing, no united politically organised force had emerged, either amongst the soldiers or amongst the civilians. There were no political parties before the recent disturbances, and it may take some time before a new ruling class takes shape.

Meanwhile, the uprisings produced astonishingly frank public discussion at public meetings and in the media. Even the "*Ethiopian Herald*", the government mouthpiece, carried detailed discussions on internal matters which were previously taboo because of the censorship laws. The paper, while not regarding the monarchy as an urgent issue, never-

theless stated that the present system of land-ownership was a "time-bomb which will destroy us if we do not take immediate steps or fail on the question of land reform".

Undoubtedly such a reform is crucial to the solution of the present crisis, but struggle on this issue may last for some while before settlement is reached.

CAMEROON

The efforts reported in our Issue No 56 at reconstituting the popular forces in Cameroon, have continued with growing success. The latest development is the formation of a Cameroon Peace Committee. The Committee numbers among its officers the most prominent democratic leaders of the Cameroon nation, both those in exile and those held as political prisoners by the present regime. Its formation was inspired by the recent World Congress of Peace Forces held in Moscow. It has issued a manifesto which carefully analyses the connection between the world-wide struggle of peace forces and the domestic struggle of the Cameroon people for democracy and workers' rights. The manifesto recalls the stirring declaration of the Moscow Conference:

'So long as there remains an inch of territory where blood is being shed or aggression committed; so long as there is a people deprived of the right to govern its own destiny; so long as there survive fascist and racist regimes crushing the democratic will of the people, the conscience of humanity will know no rest and the edifice of peace will lack solid foundations.'

Basing itself upon this concept, the manifesto goes on to formulate a six-point programme for the peace movement in the Cameroon. The following is a brief summary of the programme:

1. Repeal of emergency laws and restoration of civil liberties.
2. Lifting of the ban on the activities of the UPC (Union of Cameroon Peoples).
3. Release of political prisoners.
4. Denunciation of unequal treaties between Cameroon and France.

5. Free general elections.
6. Struggle for international detente, for the liquidation of apartheid and neo-colonialism, against aggressive NATO policies and for friendship between the peoples of the world.

This programme is supported by a wealth of material on the situation in Cameroon (a situation which, the manifesto remarks, has been largely kept from the knowledge of the outside world). Many of the political prisoners mentioned in point 3 have been in detention since 1960 and some even since 1955. Among them is the Honorary President of the Peace Committee, Owono Mimbo. He was elected to the Cameroon Parliament in April 1960, illegally arrested in the middle of his maiden speech as a member of Parliament, and has been in prison ever since.

The emergency laws mentioned in point 1 include a total ban on strikes as well as the prohibition of all political parties except the openly fascist UNC, which is the government party. The unequal treaties with France and the country's association with the EEC have produced a 'free-for-all' situation for Western capital, a collapse in the prices of the country's primary products, a catastrophic balance of payments deficit — in short an economy viable only from the point of view of the crudest forms of neo-colonial exploitation.

The people's struggle has never ceased, but there were times when it was reduced to small-scale clandestine activities in rural areas. Recent workers' and students' actions inside the country, however, combined with such developments as the formation of the Peace Committee and the efforts to reconstruct the UPC, suggest that the struggle is now entering a new phase.

BOOK REVIEWS

TRIUMPH AND AGONY

The Zulu War 1879 by Alan Lloyd (Hart-Davis, MacGibbon. 173 pages £2.95)

On January 22, 1879 at Isandhlwana Hill in Zululand, the entire central column of the British invading force — the most modern and well-equipped that the world's leading colonial power could put into the field — was outmanoeuvred and wiped-out to a man by Cetshwayo's Zulu impis. Nine hundred British troops were speared to death and as many Native levies. The battle — at the hey-day of British Empire — is regarded as one of the most humiliating defeats in the annals of Britain's military history. News of the Zulu victory stunned Victorian England, and the British commander, Lord Chelmsford, retreated to Durban in disgrace. There he waited for the thousands of troop reinforcements which were to pour in from all corners of the Empire. The campaign, for the time being came to a dead halt, although there could be no doubt about its ultimate, tragic outcome.

With remarkable heroism the tribes of Southern Africa resisted the robbery, rape and plunder of their land by white invaders. The superiority of arms and technology against simple and isolated agrarian societies spelt-out the inevitable nature of defeat. But such was the fierceness of resistance that conquest and subjugation was a long time coming, and the intruder paid dearly in life and blood. In the end it was the iron and fire-power of British arms, the resources of industrial Britain and her vast Empire, not the motley Boer commandos, that defeated the African people and imposed the cruel reign of white authority.

Britain's colonial policy of domination and expansion in Southern Africa became increasingly belligerent in the 1870's. Rivalry between the great powers, the scramble for Africa, was intense. With the discovery of diamonds and gold at this time, and the consequent industrial development and labour requirements, colonial repression intensified. One after the other, within the space of a decade, British arms crushed the many African tribes in a welter of blood as the culmination of over 200 years of armed struggle by the indigenous people.

The most dramatic and bloody of these confrontations was the Zulu repression, for the Zulus had evolved a spartan society and a military system which made them the most feared and formidable of opponents in south-east Africa.

In the process of bringing the whole of Southern Africa under her direct control British colonialism had to break conclusively both the martial power and the agrarian self-sufficiency of the Zulu people. As Shepstone, the Colonial Administrator, reported regretfully after attending Cetshwayo's coronation: the Zulus were so 'attached' to their regimental system that the recruitment of labour from that people was impossible.

The Zulu War has captured the imagination of a great many war-historians and even film-makers in Britain. Despite that cultivated air of respect and awe for a gallant underdog that one encounters in the colonial mentality, most depict the Zulus as a barbaric race, a constant menace of yester-year to 'white civilisation' — the very pretext in fact used by the British to invade the Zulu kingdom. Alan Lloyd certainly does not fit into this category. He shows genuine sympathy and admiration for the Zulu people, whom he depicts as fighting a just war; a war that they did not seek. And he reserves nothing but scorn and

contempt for the incompetent and cynical autocrats in charge of the armies and administration of Empire. He correctly dismisses as of 'trifling scale and strategic insignificance' the defence of Rorke's Drift, for which 11 Victoria Crosses were handed out to the defenders as a propaganda exercise designed to save the imperial face after the Isandhlwana disaster.

Lloyd's racy and descriptive style makes for riveting reading and is suited to a blow-by-blow account of the war. However, the chief defect of the book is its failure to deal adequately with the socio-economic background to the events and their consequences — as a result of the writer's involvement in the detailed scenario of the military clashes. Nevertheless Mr. Lloyd leaves one in no doubt that the awe-inspiring courage of the impis, the contempt for death of every warrior, stemmed from a loyalty and dedication to their King and nation; a love of their land and sovereignty. One pity is that the writer, who has researched extensively, failed to include Cetshwayo's speech to the regiments at Ulundi on January 17: "I am sending you against the white men who have invaded Zululand and driven away our cattle . . ."

Six months later, with 23,000 troops to draw from, Chelmsford sought revenge and marched a huge force on to the plains at Ulundi. There the pride of Zululand was cut down by an overwhelming barrage of shells and bullets. By this stage much of Zululand had been laid waste. Over ten thousand warriors were killed; a frightful toll in a population of perhaps some 200,000. Wherever the British went they burned villages, seized cattle and plundered kraals. It was better, the indunas urged at Ulundi, to fight and die, than to stand and watch the destruction of their barracks and the dwelling of the King. On receiving news of the burning of Ulundi, Mkabi, the doyenne of Zulu royalty, who had witnessed the rise of the Zulu nation and survived to see it fall, called her people together for the last time. There was nothing for which to live, she announced, and silently cut her own throat.

Cetshwayo understood all along that there was no other prospect but defeat. He continually attempted diplomatic means in order to come to terms with the British. But the British demanded nothing but abject surrender, and on this there could be no yielding. When the coup de grace came the warriors could only die well, in a hopeless face-to-

face confrontation. Zulu society, not unlike the other tribal societies — perhaps even more so — was traditional, conservative and tied to the soil. To have expected a flexible change in battle tactics, such as a primitive form of guerrilla warfare in a protracted struggle, would have required the revolutionising of the social system from top to bottom. The mentality of the tribes-people was a reflection of a simple subsistence economy, which served them well before the coming of the white man. Unfortunately in the 19th century the destinies of men were being controlled by colonialism.

There are two essential points to be grasped from this period of struggle. They are both of essential importance to the liberation of our country. First: there is an indomitable fighting spirit among our people, that has as its basis the resistance wars of the past. This spirit must be rekindled to the point where it competes with the contempt for death of the warriors of Shaka, Makana, Sekhukhuni, Moshoeshe and Cetshwayo. The soldiers of Umkhonto weSizwe are blazing this trail and with modern arms in their hands and modern techniques at their disposal for the attack against the enemy. Second: the unity of our people, which was not possible a hundred years ago but is a reality now, is paramount. The struggle of our people must be simultaneous, with one common goal which must never be lost sight of. Whilst finding inspiration in the deeds and traditions of our tribes — Xhosa, Pedi, Sotho, Tswana, Zulu, Pondo, Griqua, Shangaan — we must deepen that national consciousness which is a prerequisite for a nation-wide uprising and ultimate victory for all our people. The spirit of our forefathers survives. We are living in an age where history is on our side.

Alexander Sibeko

THE SHAPE OF AFRICAN REVOLUTION

Essays on the Political Economy of Africa by G. Arrighi and J. Saul. Monthly Review Press £1.80, 416 pages.

Giovanni Arrighi, an Italian economist and John Saul, a Canadian political scientist, both of distinction and ability, teamed up in the political hothouse of Dar es Salaam. Both taught at the university where they got caught up in the political academic conflicts which were one

aspect of the wider struggles in the country as a whole. Many of the essays in this book are products of that experience. In addition, Arrighi had been an associate of ZAPU and was expelled from Rhodesia, while Saul later became a close supporter of Frelimo. Both authors therefore have had many opportunities to gain a deeper insight into the problems of East and Southern Africa than most; and their writings have won them a considerable international audience.

Arrighi and Saul bring a refreshing sweep of perspective into their writings often lacking in work with a strictly national focus. At the same time it is this same sweep which leads them into errors of judgement. In the case of Tanzania, it led them into pressing for advanced Socialist policies which were ahead of the options open to the government; in the case of the struggles in Southern Africa, they also tend to propose policies which are unrealistic in the context of the struggle for liberation. They say, "In conclusion, the revolution in South Africa and Rhodesia, if it is to come, can only be proletarian and a socialist revolution and the liberation struggle will not succeed unless it is restructured in accordance with this premise."

Since none of the major mass movements in Southern Africa can be described in these terms it seems that the authors are once again jumping the gun. Unfortunately, the view that a liberation movement which does not advance a socialist programme is necessarily reactionary has gained considerable currency outside Africa, and a number of the earlier essays in this compilation support that position. The authors' anxieties about national movements of liberation stem from their disillusionment with the neocolonial systems imposed in Africa. They seem to believe that a national movement necessarily leads to a revolution of the bourgeois type, and to the entrenchment of capitalist class relations. But is this correct?

While accepting that the African revolution has been betrayed in many countries, it does not follow that the alternative is to press for socialist goals to be incorporated in the programme of liberation movements, and that they should be restructured into socialist movements of the classical type. Rather, we must recognise that the character of the social structure must determine the nature of the response; and socialists must accept that there are stages in the development of any struggle which cannot be bypassed. Nor is the answer to somehow 'fuse' the two kinds of programme as Saul suggests, as though socialism can be

smuggled in by the back door. If a movement is to mobilise a genuine mass struggle it has to represent the needs of the masses correctly and through their historical eyes; and in Southern Africa at any rate, this is through the objectives as determined by the phase of national liberation.

In the case of South Africa, while the Freedom Charter contains many radical proposals, it has thus far been interpreted as a document of national liberation and not socialism, although it is now widely acknowledged that the Charter lays the basis for a consequent socialist development. But that development will have to be formulated at a later stage and on the basis of the harnessing of new forces, in a new way, in the course of the struggle.

Recognition that there are such stages in the revolutionary process is given in the concluding essay written some time after the others. The earlier perspective is corrected by the description of Frelimo's policy of *revolutionary* nationalism which is counterposed to the 'other' variety. This essay is a valuable contribution to revolutionary theory, particularly as it traces the evolution in practice of Frelimo's policies.

These comments are not intended to minimise the importance of Arrighi's and Saul's contributions to the analysis of African problems. Their book includes essays on development strategies, labour, the proletarianization of the African peasantry and much original work in the area of political economy. It is the result of many years research and intensive discussion on the scene itself, and contains some of the best material yet produced on the African revolution. It is a work of high scholarship and deserves to be studied with commensurate care.

B.T.

AFRICAN POLITICAL HISTORY

"From Protest to Challenge" A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa 1882-1964. Vol. II Hope and Challenge. (Hoover Institution, USA)

This is the second volume in the series edited by Sheridan Johns and Thomas Karis, master-minded by Gwendolen Carter. In the spirit of something once said by President Kruger, — "One who wants to create

the future must not forget the past," — its publication is to be welcomed.

The past, in this case, is that fascinating period in the growth of the liberation struggle in South Africa between 1935 and 1952. From the campaign against Hertzog's land-for-votes package deal to the Defiance Campaign, the liberation and working class movements went through a remarkable growth and consolidation in the 1940's. Two main features of this period were the growing identification of the working class with its increased contribution to the national liberation movement, and the closer unity amongst Africans, Coloureds and Indians, together with radical whites.

The first of these trends is not sufficiently reflected in the documents comprising this volume. But for the rest, it is a fascinating compilation of programmes, speeches, minutes, correspondence etc. linked together with detailed and clearly written essays, which are informative and put the documents in perspective, whether or not one agrees with everything they say.

A.T.

A CHANGE OF PACE

Zimbabwe Now edited by S.E. Wilmer (Rex Collings, London, 1973)

Bishop Muzorewa, Claire Palley, Richard Hall, Eshmael Mlambo, Edgar Moyo, and Sean Gervasi are amongst the contributors to this short book exposing the treacherous character of the deal arranged between Ian Smith and Sir Alec Douglas-Home. A little bit out of date now, it nevertheless contains much of interest for anybody who wants to know more about Rhodesia — though it does not aim at being comprehensive. Since it was written, the armed struggle has made great strides in Zimbabwe.

B.M.

THE GREAT KAMUZU

Banda by Philip Short (Routledge & Kegan Paul), £3.50

Philip Short's biography, in spite of the fact that another publisher is said to have turned it down following pressure from Malawi, struggles hard to invest its subject with dignity, as 'a tortuous, tortured figure whose character has become a study in contradiction and paradox.' The reader may choose rather more earthy phrases to describe the petty dictator who hobnobs with apartheid and fills his prison camps almost as enthusiastically as Prime Minister Vorster fills his.

However, there is a story to be told, and it is an intriguing one. Short tells it in some detail, having researched a great deal of new information on hitherto unilluminated areas of Banda's life — his student days in America, his work as a doctor in England, and the strange episode in Ghana. Dr. Banda is understandably a secretive man, who neither writes nor talks revealingly about himself, so the inner tale can only be deduced by the imagination, but even the external facts suggest a depth of personality distortion for which the colonial experience itself must be held largely responsible: an analyst might indeed find in him a case study of the 'madness' which can be induced by the denial of self, the reversal of inherited values that race oppression demands of the black man who strives to 'make good' in a world of white power. How else to account for the transformation of the remarkable boy of 16 who tramped 400 miles in an attempt to further his education in South Africa (in fact he found himself working in a gold mine), into the black-suited, umbrella-carrying little G.P. in North London, then the vehement campaigner against Central African Federation, and at last the frank collaborationist with white Southern Africa? But the story of Banda's part in the anti-Federation campaign (peripheral though it actually was until the last stages), his subsequent break with almost every one of the young men who had led the independence struggle and invited him home to become its figurehead, the determined assumption of personal powers, and the evolution of the strategy of economic and political involvement with white South Africa needs a political analysis too, and Philip Short has very little insight to offer. The pacifism (?), anti-racialism (embracing of 'white' values?) and puritanism absorbed from his missionary education lead him to

avoid confrontation with apartheid on the ground that this would mean race war; the competitiveness and isolation forced on him by his anxiety to escape the limitations of his early environment lead him to insist on making all his decisions alone, and to trust no-one. That is as may be. But how, we are entitled to ask, does such a man, without ideology – almost without political attitudes, one suspects, although Short does make an attempt to present his political thinking coherently – come to be President of Malawi? And how does he remain so?

The book provides only clues to the answers to these questions. Chipembere, Chiume and Chisiza, for instance, clearly miscalculated in 1964 in their cabinet manoeuvre to defeat Banda; and with them fell the prospect of any other members of the tiny Malawian elite challenging the Prime Minister. But the real answers must lie in the relationship between the elite leaders and the masses. The Nyasaland African Congress' campaign against Federation has always been regarded as the best organised within the three territories: yet Chipembere felt he had to appeal to Dr. Banda to return to lead it, almost on the eve of victory. Where was the failure? Of nerve? In organisation? In lack of trust in the masses? Why, when the younger Ministers saw clearly where Banda was going, did they choose a Cabinet manoeuvre to oppose him, rather than a reference back to the Party and the people? Banda evidently took advantage of Chipembere's attempted rebellion to purge the Party and eventually to destroy it; but has dictatorial power in fact eliminated all opposition? Against whom are the Preventive Detention Act and the prison camps directed? Is Banda's own insecurity among his people part of the explanation for his resort to the white dictators for protection?

These questions, and more surrounding his total failure to alter the colonial economy with its dependence on the export of more than 80,000 migrant workers to South Africa every year, will take another book to answer.

A.R.

Letter to the Editor

SIZWE BANSI IS ALIVE AND STRUGGLING FOR FREEDOM

There is no doubt that Athol Fugard is a writer of real talent and genuine sincerity; a man acutely sensitive to social injustice. In this respect his collaboration with The Serpent Players — an African theatre workshop based in Port Elizabeth — has benefitted his work and contributed to the superiority of *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* and *The Island* over his previous 'less political', productions. The irresistible acting talent of John Kani and Winston Ntshona is a further reason why these two plays enjoyed a phenomenal success on the London stage, and is an indication of the enormous potential of black South African artists.

Critics and audiences alike have viewed these productions as 'a brilliant expose of South Africa's racist policies'. Jonathan Steele writing in *Anti-Apartheid News* (February, 1974) has described them as ripping 'the mask off apartheid not with an axe, but with a scalpel'. The general enthusiasm and positive aspects of the productions however,

should not blind us to the weaknesses and defects in Fugard's work. In this respect I agree with Gala's critical review of Fugard in *The African Communist* No. 57.

I am certain that neither Fugard, nor those who have responded so appreciatively to his plays, would deny the right of criticism or discussion of works which purport to, or at least attempt to portray some aspects of the reality of South Africa. For the revolutionary it is necessary to deal critically with all views and ideas which have a bearing on the struggle for freedom. This is not to suggest that one insists on 'optimistic endings' or bullying an artist into 'toeing the Party line'; but certainly there are basic criteria which need to be applied concerning the relationship of the artist and his work to society. The relationship between art and culture and the material development of society is a complex problem, but it must be faced, and as Gala pointed out: 'It is not enough for South African art merely to idealise the negation of the racist way of life. Art must be warmed by the fires of the struggle for liberty.' Gala further pointed to the failure of certain art — Fugard's included — to offer 'positive inspiration' whilst exploiting the 'tragedy of the situation'.

Criteria which give an understanding of the real nature of society and in so doing can help change it are as important to the artist in shaping his views and outlook, in helping him develop his work, as they are to the revolutionary in helping him assess and analyse those ideas and forces which are relevant to the success of the struggle. Of all Fugard's plays *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* best illustrates a number of fundamental points for our movement and our people. In the process of examining these it is possible that further light might be shed on Fugard's role as a dramatist. In this last respect criticism is offered constructively and sympathetically, with the view that Fugard's artistic contribution can grow into something more substantial.

IS SIZWE BANSI DEAD?

The fate of Sizwe Bansi (Winston Ntshona) is that of countless generations of 'homeland' Africans, forced to seek work in the city or starve. The crux of the play is the choice faced by Sizwe Bansi when he discovers that his pass book is not in order, and that he is in

danger of being 'endorsed out'. He has met Styles (John Kani), easily recognisable as the 'slick guy' of township life, who lives on his wits and knows how to survive in the jungle of the white man's laws — by manipulating the system to his own advantage. The pair come across the body of a dead African in the street, and Styles immediately encourages Sizwe Bansi to steal the man's pass and assume his identity. Sizwe Bansi is appalled at the suggestion; he has the pride in identity of the tribal African and baulks at the idea of stealing from the dead. Styles exhorts him to take the pass and reminds him of the alternative: leave the city, lose the chance of work, condemn his wife and children to die of starvation. Faced with this stark problem of survival, Sizwe Bansi chooses, and in assuming the dead man's identity opts to liquidate his own.

The situation dramatically portrays the savagery of apartheid, the despair and suffering that confronts the 18 million Sizwe Bansis. Yet here, at the real core of the play, where the unbearable sordidness of the system is rammed home, the production fails. At the point of truth *nothing* can be done. If this is so then as Sizwe Bansi dies, so the South African revolution dies. No real alternative is offered within the situation faced by Sizwe Bansi as defined by the play. The question, what is the solution to the problem faced by the millions of Sizwe Bansis, is not even dimly perceived let alone posed. The consequence is less than a representation of total reality. In the absence of any meaningful alternative the play can only become introspective, leading to an abandonment of any attempt to reflect objective reality.

Consider Sizwe Bansi's position. He is trapped by the situation. There is no escape other than using the system itself. He is an isolated individual — a mere atom — utterly alone. Styles offers advice, but the choice is Sizwe Bansi's, who must act as he sees fit. Whilst Fugard deals with pressures and choice — a decision of some kind must be made by the individual — there are no pressures that push Sizwe Bansi towards resistance. South African history is studded with inspiring anti-pass campaigns, strikes and demonstrations; are Athol Fugard's eyes shut to these forces, or does he not dare think about them?

Is it fair to question the play in this manner? The character Styles certainly reinforces this interpretation. At the opening of the play he is seen as a worker at a Ford car plant where, in a memorable sequence of biting satire, the exploitation of the Black work force is laid bare.

Styles leaves the job in disgust when he sees in the servility of the management to a visiting Henry Ford the comparable behaviour of the blacks to the whites — albeit behind a mask of contempt. There is no meaningful alternative for Styles either. There is no question of the workers' potential strength or unity; no possibility of bettering their conditions through struggle. No! Styles is filled with loathing at the position he as an individual occupies and decides to leave. And chooses what? A photographic studio in the township, where he seduces his fellow Africans to pose before his cameras and spend more than they intended or can afford.

Sizwe Bansi and Styles are recognisable people; their problems are real problems; but they are real in only one sense, or more precisely half-a-sense; they are real in their suffering, but not real in what they can become. Since there is no alternative — and an alternative does exist — they cannot, do not, take on a full reality.

Athol Fugard's work — the South African setting aside — is primarily about the individual's struggle for survival, and most explicitly, the choice the individual makes. Since Fugard devotes so much attention to this problem of 'choice' it is logical to ask why that 'choice' never takes into account a wider, more objective range of choices? Or is Fugard labouring under such a highly individualistic outlook that his characters are incapable of any but the most subjective views of themselves and their situation?

Artistic creativity is a highly complex process, intuitively and consciously evolved. However, what is more pertinent is that the individual's outlook is determined by the social class or group to which he belongs, or that class whose interests he may come to share. The worker, long before he grasps the essence of socialism, instinctively understands the need for solidarity, unity and collective strength, on which his survival depends. The optimism of the collective spirit, and its importance in the sphere of the arts, was noted by Maxim Gorky who stated: "... pessimism is entirely foreign to folklore, despite the fact that the creators of folklore lived a hard life; their bitter drudgery was robbed of all meaning by the exploiters, while in private life they were disfranchised and defenceless. Despite all this, the collective body is in some way distinguished by a consciousness of its own immortality and an assurance of its triumph over all hostile forces". Whilst capitalist productive relations teach the worker the need for socialism, bourgeois

society isolates the artist, who becomes an individual working in isolation and creating first for himself with a consequent strong tendency towards subjectivism.

PHILOSOPHY OF DESPAIR

The philosophy of existentialism has greatly influenced the modern art and literature of capitalist society, and the outlook of a large section of intellectuals. It is primarily a philosophy of extreme individualism with a subjective view of human freedom, in which the question of 'choice' is paramount. To Camus, 'a free man' becomes just that the moment he 'chooses' freely. Jean-Paul Sartre wrote in 1946 that 'Man is nothing but that which he makes of himself' so that the coward 'makes himself cowardly'. He has since come to recognise 'the power of circumstances' in limiting individual freedom.

It is not difficult to detect the strong influence of existentialism in Fugard's work. Gala pointed to the influence of Samuel Becket, whose work abounds with cripples, misfits and helpless geriatrics. What can be seen in the isolated, hopeless figures of *The Blood Knot*, *Boesman and Lena*, *Hello and Goodbye*, *Sizwe Bansi* – whilst in the nominally South African setting – is the so-called 'metaphysical prison' or vicious cycle of existentialist drama. Existentialism reflects the crisis of liberalism, which cannot answer the questions posed by today's problems, or explain the feelings of fear, desperation and hopelessness inherent in an exploiting society.

This philosophy of despair sees the individual as being helplessly cut-off from society, locked in his own private torment, the perpetual victim of hostile forces. Husband and wife, brother and sister, black and white, exploiter and exploited, even the prisoners in *The Island*, are all locked in their own 'metaphysical prison' from which there is no real escape. Metaphysics, as a method of thinking (rather than a philosophy as such) is the antithesis of dialectics. It is entirely subjective and one-sided; regards things and phenomena as final and immutable and independent of one another; it fails to understand how contradictions operate.

No wonder then that Fugard can only portray Sizwe Bansi as an isolated individual; a lonely atom. Marxist dialectics offers an under-

standing of contradiction, movement and interaction, in nature and in social life; so that laws are discerned which are capable of bringing the single atom into union with other atoms, resulting under certain conditions in a qualitative and fundamental change. Nor is it surprising that Fugard should see himself as a 'lonely atom', or in his words as the 'classic example of the guilt-ridden impotent white liberal of South Africa'. The 'guilt-ridden white liberal' remains impotent, above all isolated; but the individual — regardless of background — who becomes part of the mass struggle is an individual transformed. Equally is it surprising that Fugard should oppose the international cultural boycott of South Africa if he views things in isolation? The efficacy of the cultural boycott is its interconnection and interaction with all other forms and methods of struggle which together are capable of smashing white supremacy. Fugard has recently announced his intention of concentrating on writing plays and ending his experiment in devising productions in conjunction with others. This could be a retrogressive step, since one can argue that the added force of *Sizwe Bansi* and *The Island* results from Fugard's contact with The Serpent Players. Despite certain weaknesses *The Island* has a hopeful aspect missing in the other plays.

THE ALTERNATIVE IS STRUGGLE

Fugard is not alone in seeing no real alternative to the present situation in South Africa. Arguments such as 'half a loaf is better than none' and 'we are powerless and should use what is available at present' are used in favour of accepting the Bantustan proposals. Accepting the confines of Sizwe Bansi's 'metaphysical prison' is not dissimilar to arguing for foreign investment in the Bantustans because 'I am forced to do something immediately for my starving, unemployed people'. The same philosophy of despair is expressed by Chief Buthelezi when he rejects the armed struggle because 'I can't support any line of action that can only result in my people being mowed down as cannon fodder'.

It is only with the advantage of a theory which gives an understanding of the forces behind historical change, a theory which enables one to discern the correlation of forces within society and the driving

forces in social change, that the apparent impregnability of white South Africa becomes less than awe-inspiring. An unshakeable faith in the potential power of the people is born when one is able to perceive the consequences of the shared experience, conditions and aspirations of the 18 million Sizwe Bansi's; understand the deep contradictions leading to the inevitable downfall of apartheid; and grasp the principles by which unity and organisation can be forged so that the self-interest of the individual merges with that of the collective. Marxism-Leninism is not only a powerful tool for the revolutionary, but it can help the artist escape from isolation. As A.L. Morton, the historian, has observed: "Marxism is a liberating theory not only for the masses and politically but for the artist in his work".

Now, as never before in our history, the conditions for struggle are ripening. The anger of our people is rising, mass activity is increasing, and the Portuguese colonial system is crashing down on our very doorstep. The alternative to living on our knees under apartheid is materialising with rapid force. The people must be awakened to the potential; their consciousness must be deepened. Sizwe Bansi is neither isolated nor dead; he is alive and struggling for freedom; his cause is nothing less than the total liberation of South Africa.

Ideas which express the interests of the oppressed, play an indispensable role in the struggle to overthrow the existing system. Our writers, poets, artists must grasp the penetrating power of Marxism-Leninism; they have an important part to play in developing the consciousness of the masses and in combatting the ideas of the oppressor; above all they must deepen their commitment to the struggle and join ranks with the freedom fighters. As William Morris, the 19th Century English socialist, stated: "... the cause of Art has something else to appeal to: no less than the hope of the people for the happy life which has not yet been granted to them. There is our hope: the cause of Art is the cause of the people."

R.K.

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